MASTER'S THESIS

RONALD KENNETH BELL

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THE FILIPINO *JUNTA* IN HONG KONG, 1898-1903: HISTORY OF A REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION

A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

San Diego State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Asian Studies

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by

Ronald Kenneth Bell

April 1974

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PREFACE

As social awareness and political consciousness evolved in the nineteenth century Spanish Philippines a need for radical change became necessary. At first, the Filipinos requested reforms but, as their requests went unheeded, charismatic and visionary leaders arose from their ranks and united the masses in a more ambitious crusade--independence. The previously docile population became fierce fighters successfully opposing their former colonial masters. In retrospect, this event was a classic example of the results of socio-political evolution, and a forecast of Southeast Asian history.

The Philippine revolution consisted of two phases--the insurrection against the Spaniards, and the revolt against the Americans. Continuity between the phases was provided by an organization known as the Hong Kong *Junta*. The object of this thesis is to analyze the *Junta*, determine its purpose, and measure its impact.

Chapter I will examine the period just preceding the revolution. To trace the roots of the Hong Kong *Junta*, it will be necessary to establish the

motivating forces that impelled the actions and reactions of the members of the *Junta*.

In Chapter II, the *Junta* itself will be described--its formation, resources, personalities, and objectives. On this stage and with these props, the cast of the *Junta* will enact their part in history.

The events that involved the *Junta* with the United States will be examined in Chapter III. The next chapter will describe the internal problems of the *Junta*, identify the factions and deal with the external relations of the *Junta*, specifically the representative to the United States.

Chapter V will deal with the reorganization of the *Junta*, indentifying its new role, following the United States' ratification of the Paris Peace Treaty. Conclusions will be recorded in Chapter VI, bearing upon the interrelationship of the *Junta* with the Philippine Insurrection and with revolution in general.

The special advice and guidance of Professor Rizalino A. Oades of San Diego State University are gratefully acknowledged.

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CHAPTER I

A PROLOGUE TO THE *JUNTA*

The awakening of the Filipino people to national self-consciousness was a gradual process economically, politically, and socially. As trade and commerce increased, so did contact with foreigners. Manila, known as the "Pearl of the Orient," flourished as a center of trade which accelerated social sophistication on the part of the natives, particularly the Tagalogs, inhabiting this area of central Luzon.

Spain, which had colonized the Philippine Islands since the middle of the sixteenth century, perhaps unwittingly contributed to the emergence of the Filipino nationality. Spanish clergy introduced Christianity, and the worship of one God provided a common bond for the natives. Though limited by the friars to religious exercises characterized by conservatism, formal education also began to expand the world of the Filipinos. In addition, common grievances, the influx of liberal ideas, and racial prejudice by the Spaniards contributed to a sense of national unity.

During the nineteenth century, a new class of Filipinos began to assert itself. As certain natives

improved their economic lot, became educated, and intermarried with the Spanish administrators or the immigrant Chinese, they formed a middle class. Generally composed of *mestizos*--people of Spanish, Chinese and Filipino ancestry, this class continued to prosper. Affluence permitted greater opportunities, particularly in education. The middle class was not confined to church schooling; wealth enabled study in secular institutions, and travel to Europe for advanced studies. Although the educated Filipinos, called *Illustrados*, theoretically came from varying economic strata, education required money; hence the members of this class were usually wealthy.[1]

Spaniards constituted a small minority of the population,[2] and the *Illustrados* could claim equal or better professional and educational backgrounds. Nevertheless, the *Illustrados* were denied access to political and ecclesiastical positions of power or influence because of their origins. Laws and representation in the Spanish *Cortés*[3] favored the Spaniard. Frustrations generated by Spanish policies gradually alienated the *Illustrados* as a group, forcing them to develop their own power base.[4]

The *Illustrados* became a vehicle for the desires of the people by transmitting grievances to the Spaniards. This development was not entirely due to altruism, but was also based upon the *Illustrados'* desire to defend their own interests. Permeated with liberal ideas garnered from Europe and America, but socially and politically circumscribed because of their mixed ancestry, the *Illustrados* desired a greater voice in the politics and administration of the Philippines. Although few in numbers and limited in support, they naturally gravitated towards the issues of the people. In response to iniquities suffered by the natives at the hands of the Spaniards (who sometimes referred to the people as *chongos*--colloquial Filipino for "monkeys"),[5] reform became the platform of the *Illustrados*.

During the 1880s and 1890s students and intellectuals began to campaign both in Spain and the Philippines for freer government, replacement of the Spanish friars by Filipino priests, honest administration, improvement of educational facilities, and removal of restrictions upon the press and public opinion. The aim was to awaken the "lethargic" and "docile" masses and to gather support for a program of reform among their own countrymen as well as Spanish liberals. This

campaign quickly turned into a propaganda movement, although it remained nonviolent and legal in character.

One of the first organs of propaganda was a fortnightly paper, *La Solidaridad,* founded by Graciano Lopez Jaena in 1889 and published in Madrid. The list of contributors to this paper could have constituted a roster of early Filipino revolutionary heroes; e.g., José Rizal, M. H. del Pilar, Eduardo de Lete, Antonio and Juan Luna, José Panganiban, Mariano Ponce, Isabelo de los Reyes, Dominador Gomez, Pedro Paterno. Others included liberal Spaniards in sympathy with the Filipino cause.

The paper featured articles describing political, social, and economic conditions in the Philippines and news concerning other Spanish colonies. Often authors, to protect their relatives, would use pseudonyms, for the paper was banned and considered seditious by Spanish authorities in the Philippines. The paper was surreptitiously introduced into the island colony and read furtively. Copies were passed from hand to hand and eventually reached a considerable portion of the populace.[6]

The leaders of the propaganda movement desired not only to maintain, but also to tighten, the

traditional connection between the Philippines and Spain. This is not to say that they were oblivious to trends. They fully appreciated the consequences if the Spanish continued to ignore their request for reform. Radicals anxious to take control of the movement and determined to steer it into a violent confrontation had joined the movement.[7]

José Rizal, a young Filipino medical student who epitomized the intellectual leadership of the propagandists, detected the drift away from reform and observed certain weaknesses. Seeing that *La Solidaridad* was not succeeding in its campaign to convince the Spanish government of the need for changes, Rizal decided to produce a more forceful vehicle. The result was his novel *Noli Me Tangere* (Don't Touch Me), whose purpose was to expose the sufferings of the Filipino people and present Philippine life as it actually was. The success of this novel prompted a second, *El Filibusterismo*, a continuation of the story of the first novel.[8]

To the Spanish, Rizal was warning that unless the demands of the people were heard, the only recourse would be violence. To the Filipinos, he was cautioning

against personal hatred and ambition, and was espousing love of country.[9]

To foster partiotism, Rizal formed a society called the *Liga Filipina* in July, 1892. The society floundered shortly after its formation due to Rizal's deportation by the Spaniards to Dapitan, a remote area on the island of Mindanao. His *Liga* was temporarily revived under Andres Bonifacio, a self-educated reformer with radical inclinations. Apolinario Mabini, a brilliant but physically crippled intellectual, was appointed secretary of the supreme council. In his words, the objectives of the society were

> to contribute to the support of *La Solidaridad* and the reforms it asked; to raise funds to meet the expenses not only of the periodical but also of the public meetings organized to support such reforms . . . in brief, to have recourse to all peaceful and legal means . . . .[10]

Due to lack of support, disagreements among its members, and a conviction on the part of its leaders that conciliation and compromise were bringing no results, the society was disbanded. One group was retained, however, calling itself the *Cuerpo de Compromisarios* (body of compromisers), specifically intended to support, through a monthly contribution of five pesos, the publication of *La Solidaridad*.

Other forces were also at work influencing Filipino self-consciousness. Masonry, introduced by native reformists returning from Spain, spread throughout Manila and the surrounding provinces. To the alarm of the authorities, who believed that the Masons were fostering hatred against Spain, Masonic lodges gained in popularity. The platform of the Filipino Masons actually rested on their desire to become Spanish citizens. Far from hating the Spaniards, they desired the Philippines to become a Spanish province.

In spite of their initial promise, the native societies and the propaganda campaign were failing to accomplish their objectives. This was due to petty jealousies among the reformers, difficulty in collecting funds, and lack of coordination. The negative results discouraged the reformists and thinned their ranks.[11] New leaders, however, were beginning to assert themselves in the Philippines--aggressive and fiercely nationalistic men who were determined to change the character of the movement. Believing it was futile to continue a peaceful approach to reform, they began to lay revolutionary plans.

In July, 1892, Andres Bonifacio, a spokesman for the radical elements, formed a new society--the

K. K. K. or *Katipunan*, promoting violence rather than conciliation.[12] This organization had two aims: (1) to unite the Filipinos into one nation, (2) to win Philippine independence by means of revolution. Under Bonifacio and Emilio Jacinto, a man with a genius for organization, the *Katipunan* grew in membership. Utilizing the secret, ritualistic methods of the Masons, the *Katipunan* required certain initiation rites finalized by the *pacto de sangre* (blood pact). Code names, passwords, and secret symbols were used. Including both men and women, the society played upon the superstitions of the masses, impressing them with ritualistic mysteries and secrecy, and the need for obedience. It also served to counteract the hold of the friars, who often used the confessional to extract secrets from the people.[13]

From its inception, the *Katipunan* was phenomenally successful and spread quickly throughout the provinces of Luzon. The society had its own newspaper, the *Kalayaan*, which disseminated its revolutionary ideals. In addition, other literature designed to incite the people was produced by the leaders of the *Katipunan*, and rules of conduct were taught to the

membership. By the middle of 1896, the society had recruited an estimated 100,000 members.[14]

There were some, however, who rejected the aims of the *Katipunan*. The most prominent opponent was José Rizal, who condemned armed revolt. He believed the people were unprepared, armed revolt premature. Rizal felt that evolution, not revolution, was needed.

Eventual discovery was inevitable. The friars discovered the secrets of the *Katipunan*, and reported to the Spanish administration.[15] This action had several effects. It drove the organization into deeper secrecy. In addition, it further incensed the people against Spanish injustices and restrictions. The Spanish reaction of indiscriminate persecution drove the men who preferred peaceful reform into the camp of the men who preferred armed revolt. Perhaps most important, it forced the hand of the rebels. Despite a severe shortage of arms and supplies, Bonifacio insisted upon armed resistance, and led his followers into the safety of the hills. The discovery had forced the *Katipunan* into a premature confrontation with the Spaniards.

At this point a transition from the liberal Filipino viewpoint held by men like Rizal to the radical views of Bonifacio was taking place. The time was ripe

for the radical and aggressive ideas of the *Katipunan* to attract some of the upper class Filipinos who had been liberal, and part of the intelligentsia who were impatient for accomplishments. The risks were the same, for the Spaniards made no distinction between liberal and radical Filipino elements.

The situation was by no means clear-cut. Filipinos, in particular the intelligentsia, still had strong cultural ties to Spain despite a growing sense of patriotism based upon a Filipino rather than a Spanish self-consciousness. Down the socioeconomic ladder, the ties to Spain became weaker. The peasants were much less concerned with the culture of Spain than were the affluent *mestizos*. Peasant patriotism was just beginning, based upon the more radical influences.

The *Katipunan's* success is partially attributable to its appeal to the masses, for the organization served as a social as well as a political outlet. In some respects it replaced the church; as a popular secret society it was timely in its appearance in opposition to the Spanish administration and particularly the clergy.[16] The way had been paved by the propagandists, whose writings had begun to seep down to the lower classes. Efforts by the Spaniards to curtail the

propagandists had also affected the lower classes and further aggravated their grievances. The *Katipunan* became an outlet for their frustrations and provided a positive direction against Spanish oppression.

On August 26, 1896, the first clash between the *Katipuneros* and the Spaniards took place in Bulakán province on Luzon.[17] The area around Manila was the epicenter of the revolt. The peaceful demands of the early propagandists were now replaced by a call for independence. In a cave in the hills of Balintawak, Bonifacio and a band of *Katipuneros* coined the rallying cry, "Long live Philippine Independence!" As they turned from sloganeering to action, the Spaniards responded with a reign of terror. Arrests were indiscriminate and mere suspicion was the basis for torture. On August 30, Ramon Blanco, the Spanish Governor of the Philippines, proclaimed a state of war in the provinces surrounding Manila.[18]

Thus began the first phase of the Philippine revolution, the insurrection against Spain. Independence, which would be a primary goal of the Hong Kong *Junta* and the driving force behind the revolution in its later stages, was now the ambition of only a few

naive Tagalogs, forced into premature, violent action by the uncovering of their secret society.[19]

According to historian John Foreman, the rebel aims at that time were reflected in the cry "Long Live Spain: Death to the Friars!"[20] Many of the sophisticates, educated men of position who in any national movement would have been the leaders, considered independence an ephemeral ambition. The *Katipunan* and the revolution of 1896 were not the products of the upper class.[21] There was doubt whether the Filipinos, lacking arms, could defeat the Spaniards. Moreover, as the possibility remained that Spain would grant reforms, the upper class was still reluctant to jeopardize its prominent position in the Spanish-controlled Filipino society.[22] Certainly there was a natural sympathy for the cause of one's countrymen, but this was not sufficient reason to risk everything. Many well-to-do Filipinos hastened to assure the Spanish authorities of their loyalty. They were met with suspicion and rebuff.[23]

Certain men of high principle and moral integrity such as Mabini and Rizal did not take part in the uprising of 1896. Approached by *Katipunan* agents, Rizal firmly refused to approve or support

a revolution. Even after he was arrested by the Spaniards, Rizal continued to maintain this position, protesting his innocence and counseling against violence.

Several important factors weakened the cause of the revolutionists. First, they lacked a solid corps of leaders and policy makers. Intellectuals were missing, as were men capable of sustaining a revolutionary movement beyond the initial stages of violence. Bonifacio's following of *Katipuneros* was small. Bonifacio was a dedicated patriot, but he lacked the spark necessary to attract people, to unite the various tribes, and to enlist the aid and cooperation of the intelligentsia. Second, the revolutionists lacked arms and money. Against the well-equipped Spaniards, *bolo* knives were poor weapons. Without funds, there was little chance of obtaining the arms necessary for prolonged resistance. Third, true unity still did not exist among the people. Many had only a vague idea of the revolutionary purpose of the leaders. Others had visions of self aggrandizement or were motivated by racial hatred.

Independence was a state that was glorious and desirable, but the qualifications necessary to attain

and sustain it were still not fully appreciated by the common man. He could only express his need for reform. The situation was not static, however, for forces and events would dictate change.

The propagandists possessed a dual loyalty. They were Filipino nationalists in the sense that they loved their country, the Philippine Islands, and their people. They did not consider themselves a separate race, as the Spanish did, but a part of the Filipino nationality. They desired improvement, recognition, and relative equality for the people. The duality in loyalty existed in the propagandists' strong cultural, intellectual, and political ties to Spain. Their desire to become a province of the homeland reflected a wish to raise the status of the Filipino people to that of the Spanish. The level of the *Illustrados* would automatically be raised thereby, enabling them as the elite among the Filipinos to join the elite among the Spaniards.

There was also a strong sense of idealism in the propagandists' goal--idealistic in the sense that they believed it was possible to evolve a common polity out of different races and cultures.[24] In view of the fact that the Spaniards considered themselves to be the

superior culture and were in fact the ruling elite in the Philippines, it was too much to suppose that the Spaniards would accept the proposed equality.

The propagandists possessed the training and intellect to provide the revolution with direction. Their movement, which expressed the people's need for reform, was a stimulus to both Spaniards and Filipinos. Serving to awaken the resentment of the people against the Spaniards, the propagandists incited men such as Bonifacio and Jacinto to action, first by verbalizing their complaints, then--through frustration due to a lack of results--provoking them to adopt more violent means.

The Spaniards reacted to the propagandists with a regime of cruelty and suppression. This only served to strengthen the resolve of the radicals to adopt violence in lieu of compromise. The radical members forming the *Katipunan* provided impetus to the revolutionary movement. Whereas the propagandists lacked the desire to risk their station and privileges, and whereas cultural ties were too strongly oriented towards Spain, there existed no such restrictions on the membership of the *Katipunan*. The lower and middle class members of Filipino native society were more

emotional than intellectual in their motivation. They had little to lose in status or rights. They had borne the brunt of the political, ecclesiastical, and social subjugation imposed by the Spaniards.

If the two factions--the intellectual propagandists and the violent revolutionaries--could unite, the revolutionary force would have the capacity to become a viable movement. It was to be the action of the Spaniards that would marry the two groups.

Governor General Blanco, at first sympathetic towards the legitimate Filipino demands for reform, eventually succumbed to the pressures of the Spanish secret police and clergy.[25] Spanish propaganda, initiated by the friars and administrators in Manila, worked against the liberal Filipinos' or Spaniards' efforts to curtail the local insurrection.[26] The prisons of Manila were soon stuffed to the point of suffocation with prisoners. Hundreds of persons were deported without trial, sentence, warning, or apparent justification. Others were tried and executed on the flimsiest of testimony.[27]

The arrival in the Philippines of General Polavieja, who had put down the 1890 uprising in Cuba, signaled an increase of Spanish suppression. Sent to

take command of the newly arriving Spanish troops, Polavieja was identified with the clergy. The harsh, inflexible military policy he instituted resembled his tactics in Cuba.[28]

Insensitive to the feelings of the natives, the Spaniards crowned their blunders with the execution of José Rizal, the one man who commanded the respect of both the liberal and radical Filipino factions. Under Polavieja, a military court tried Rizal for rebellion, sedition, and illicit association. The secret and summary method of trial was repugnant to the Filipinos, many of whom knew Rizal was opposed to armed revolt. Moreover, to them Rizal embodied the best of Filipino attributes.

> Rizal represented all the poetry and imagination in the dawning national aspirations of a poetical people . . . . He was, besides, chief spokesman of the sterner judgment of the saner element among the people; . . . his name was a fetish among them [the masses].[29]

On December 30, 1896, Rizal was executed. The shots reverberated throughout the archipelago, destroying the remnants of respect for the Spaniards. By this act, Spain had made a major contribution to unifying the people against her. "The execution of Rizal," as John Foreman put it, "was a most impolitic act."[30] Emilio

Aguinaldo, a young man from rural Cavite Viejo, filled the gap. Joining the insurgents at the beginning of the revolt, he fought his way into prominence by winning battles. His successes, sorely needed, provided important psychological and military impetus to the people.

Aguinaldo was born on March 22, 1869. The municipal rolls of the Spanish listed the Aguinaldo family as *mestizo sangleyes,* or natives mixed with Chinese blood.[31] Aguinaldo grew up as a scion of a prominent local family, and attended the College of San Juan de Letran in Manila. In his third year, he left school and returned home. At a young age Aguinaldo began to gain a reputation as a leader. First elected *Cabeza de Barangay* (village head man), at the age of twenty-five the town officials elected him *Capitan Municipal* (town mayor). Influenced by the writings of Rizal, like most young men of his generation and class, Aguinaldo became imbued with the spirit of nationalism. Shortly after being elected *Cabeza*, Aguinaldo joined the Masonry but, as the organization was not daring enough, he joined the *Katipunan*. Given the code name of "*Magdalo*," he became active in the organization and

quickly rose in rank.[32] In time this name was applied to Aguinaldo's faction as opposed to Bonifacio's.

Utilizing his position of *Capitan Municipal* as a cover, Aguinaldo secretly opposed the Spanish. Upon learning that his disguise had been broken, Aguinaldo came into the open, and led the Cavite revolt on August 31, 1896, defeating a detachment of the Spanish guard. With a small force Aguinaldo overcame the Spaniards in other towns and gained a reputation as a capable military leader.[33]

Other individuals were also distinguishing themselves, but it was Aguinaldo who possessed the charisma to attract hundreds of nationalists to his camp. A secret of his rising influence was the popular belief that he possessed the *anting-anting* (talisman), making him invulnerable. His continuing successes strengthened this faith.[34]

Bonifacio, the able organizer of the *Katipunan*, lacked military skills. While he experienced a series of defeats and a loss in popularity, the victorious Aguinaldo was fast becoming the idol of the masses. A split developed in the ranks of the *Katipuneros*, with Aguinaldo supported by the *Magdalo* faction headquartered

at San Francisco de Malabon, and Bonifacio supported by the *Magdiwang* faction located at Imus.[35]

Believing in a rule-or-ruin philosophy, Bonifacio advocated extermination of the Europeans. To the contrary, Aguinaldo insisted that he was fighting for a cause for which he sought sympathy and moral support from "friends of liberty" all over the world. At Cavite, he issued a manifesto declaring the aim of the revolution to be "Liberty and Independence," and proposing a new government similar to that of the United States.[36] Bonifacio denied the need for a new government and claimed that the *Katipunan* could function as a revolutionary government directing military activities.

To resolve these differences, most of the leaders of the revolution gathered at Tejeros, in San Francisco de Malabon, on March 22, 1897. Bonifacio was present, but Aguinaldo was not. Following heated arguments, a vote was taken. The outcome repudiated Bonifacio's leadership; the assembly voted to replace the *Katipunan* with a new revolutionary government, under Emilio Aguinaldo as president.

Bonifacio, defiant but powerless to oppose the majority, left Tejeros with a few loyal followers, intent on establishing his own government. Shortly

afterward, Bonifacio's band was attacked by Aguinaldo's followers and Bonifacio was taken prisoner. At a summary court-martial, Bonifacio was found guilty of sedition, and was executed.

The circumstances of the death of Bonifacio are clouded. Aguinaldo has claimed that it was an unfortunate mistake, but others say that in order to preserve the integrity of the revolutionary forces, Bonifacio's death was a regrettable but necessary political move. Mabini asserts that Bonifacio's death was a crime attributable to Aguinaldo's personal ambition overcoming true patriotism.[37]

During the period following Bonifacio's death, the revolutionary forces suffered repeated reverses. To some extent the enthusiasm for the revolutionary cause had been squelched by the death of Bonifacio, but the revolution was by no means suppressed. Aguinaldo was forced to retreat in July, 1897, to the mountains in Bulakán province. Here he established his headquarters and continued his resistance to Spain.

On November 1, 1897, after the revolutionary leaders had agreed to continue the war at all costs, the Biak-na-Bato Republic was proclaimed.[38] Felix Ferrer and Isabelo Artacho, newly appointed

revolutionary leaders, were designated to prepare a provisional constitution. They copied the Cuban Revolutionary Constitution of Jimaguayú, 1895, and passed it off as their own work.[39] This became known as the Biak-na-Bato Constitution and was signed by the majority of the rebels. The aims of the new republic were the separation of the Philippines from the Spanish monarchy and the formation of an independent state.

General Fernando Primo de Rivera, the successor to General Polavieja who had returned to Spain in poor health, realized the prohibitive cost in money and lives of crushing a rebellion, so far from the homeland, by military means. Being a man of tact and acumen, he realized the advantages of a peaceful settlement over a lengthy and costly guerrilla campaign. After several fruitless attempts by de Rivera to negotiate with Aguinaldo through prominent Spaniards, Pedro A. Paterno, an established lawyer from Manila, volunteered to act as arbitrator. In late 1897, Paterno succeeded in negotiating an agreement called the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, consisting of three documents signed by the Governor General for Spain, de Rivera, and by himself for the insurgents.

The first document, signed on November 18, stipulated the payment of ₱800,000 for surrendered arms, and the exile of Aguinaldo and his companions to Hong Kong.[40] The remittance was to be accomplished in three installments: ₱400,000 in the form of a bank draft payable in Hong Kong on Aguinaldo's departure from the Philippines, ₱200,000 when the number of arms surrendered exceeded 700, and ₱200,000 after the *Te Deum* was sung in the Manila Cathedral and general amnesty had been proclaimed.

The second document, signed on December 14, granted "an ample and general amnesty" to the rebels and reiterated the financial arrangements of the indemnity mentioned in the first document. The last paragraph of the second agreement alluded to the hope and expectation of the Filipino people that the Spaniards would institute the desired reforms, but nothing concrete was stipulated.

The third document, signed on December 15, 1897, called for the payment of an additional indemnity. Besides the ₱800,000 already mentioned, ₱900,000 was to be distributed among the civilians victimized by the war. The total indemnity agreed upon in the three

documents thus amounted to ₱1,700,000, a relatively low price for the Spaniards to pay to end a costly campaign.[41]

On December 19, at a rebel conference held in Biak-na-Bato, an agreement was reached to invest the money in a business venture, the profits to be spent educating Filipino youths. Isabelo Artacho was appointed director of commerce, responsible for the disbursement of funds. Artacho, the rebel general Artemio Ricarte, and Baldomero Aguinaldo, a cousin of Emilio, were left behind to represent the supreme council in the implementation of the terms called for by the pact.[42]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Bonifacio S. Salamanca, *The Filipino Reaction to American Rule: 1901-1913* (Hamden, Conn.: The Shoe String Press, 1968), p. 13; and Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson, comps., *The Philippine Islands: 1493-1898,* 55 vols. (Cleveland, Ohio: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1909), 52:122-123, 183.

[2]*Manila Times*, 12 July 1899, lists the inhabitants of the Philippines as: 9 million natives, 16 thousand Europeans, and 150 thousand Asiatics.

[3]*Cortés* is the national legislature of Spain.

[4]Salamanca, *Filipino Reaction to American Rule,* p. 15.

[5]James Alfred LeRoy, *The Americans in the Philippines*, 2 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1970), 1:62.

[6]Guadalupe Forés-Ganzon, trans., *La Solidaridad,* vol. 1, 1889 (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1967), p. viii.

[7]Horatio de la Costa, *Readings in Philippine History* (Manila: MDB Printing, 1965), p. 229.

[8]Apolinario Mabini, *The Philippine Revolution* (Republic of the Philippines, Department of Education: National Historical Commission, 1969), pp. 33, 35.

[9]Ibid., p. 37.

[10]Ibid., p. 40.

[11]Gregorio F. Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History*, 2 vols. (Manila: Philippine Education Co., 1956), 2:149.

[12]This was the *Kataastaan Kagalanggalangang Katipunan Ng Mga Anak Ng Bayan* (Highest and Most Respected Association of the Sons of the Country), more conveniently known by its initials K. K. K. or as the *Katipunan.*

[13]LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:88.

[14]Ibid., p. 85.

[15]Ibid., p. 88.

[16]Ibid., pp. 81, 83.

[17]At the outbreak of hostilities, Spanish troops numbered 1,500, augmented by 14,000 native soldiers of questionable loyalty. Only about 300 Spanish troops were in the Manila area. Within six months, Spain sent 26,000 additional men. Many of the native troops remained loyal, their allegiance corresponding to the stand taken by their village or province. Ibid., pp. 94, 95; and John Foreman, *The Philippine Islands* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), p. 378.

[18]Teodoro Manguiat Kalaw, *The Philippine Revolution* (Manila: J. B. Vargas Filipiniana Foundation, 1969), p. 19.

[19]Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands: 1493-1898*, 52:205.

[20]Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, p. 379.

[21]Salamanca, *Filipino Reaction to American Rule*, p. 17.

[22]Ibid.

[23]LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:93.

[24]Usha Mahajani, *Philippine Nationalism: External Challenge and Filipino Response, 1565-1946* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1971), p. 62.

[25]Governor General Blanco was not a liberal, but sympathized with many of the demands of the Filipino people. Governor Blanco, however, did not have sufficient political influence, nor did he have the strength of character to firmly and continuously oppose the friars and administrators who, in order to discredit Blanco, accused him of supporting the

Filipinos. For an excellent analysis of this man's role, see LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:107-108.

[26]Addressed to Spanish reinforcements, the rabid speech of Rafael Comege, president of the Spanish Casino, is an example of nihilistic policies exhorted in the Spanish propaganda and speeches. Comege said, "Destroy! Kill! . . . Wild beasts should be exterminated; weeds should be exterminated!" Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, p. 549.

[27]LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:106; and Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, p. 364.

[28]Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, p. 364. Polavieja arrived with 1,200 Spanish troops. Ibid., p. 378.

[29]LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:114.

[30]Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, p. 389.

[31]Carlos Quirino, *The Young Aguinaldo* (Manila: Regal Printing Co., 1969), p. 15.

[32]Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History*, 2:65; and Quirino, *Young Aguinaldo*, pp. 26, 27.

[33]Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, p. 371.

[34]Ibid., p. 372. The *anting-anting* supposedly gave protection from bodily harm. Numerous stories of Aguinaldo's miraculous escapes began to circulate, feeding his fast-growing reputation.

[35]Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History*, 2:168.

[36]Leandro H. Fernandez, *The Philippine Republic* (New York: Columbia University, 1926), p. 28.

[37]Mabini, *Philippine Revolution*, p. 48; cf. Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History*, 2:170, 171; LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:120; and T. A. Agoncillo, "Aguinaldo and the Death of Bonifacio and Luna," in *Aguinaldo in Retrospect*,

ed. Garcia Mauro (Manila: Philippine Historical Association, 1969), pp. 37-45.

[38]Biak-na-Bato, an impregnable mountain area of northern Bulakan province, where the insurgent forces made their headquarters. LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:125-26.

[39]Jaime C. Veyra, "The Constitution of Biak-na-Bato," *Journal of the Philippine Historical Society* (Manila) 1 (July 1941): 3-11.

[40]Some sources have stated that the payments were in U. S. dollars, others that they were in Mexican dollars, and still others in *pesos*. Since *pesos* were the main unit of value at this time, all sums have been stated as *pesos*. Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History*, 2:125.

[41]Primo de Rivera's estimated annual loss through death and sickness was 40 percent or 10,000 men. LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:130.

[42]T. A. Agoncillo, *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic* (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines, 1960), pp. 44, 45.

CHAPTER II

THE DEATH OF THE PACT AND THE BIRTH OF THE *JUNTA*

Once the Pact of Biak-na-Bato was concluded, the Filipino insurgents prepared to fulfill their part of the bargain. Accompanied by a lieutenant, Aguinaldo traveled to the village of Saul on the Lingayen Gulf. The journey was not characterized by sadness and defeatism, as might have been expected, but by an attitude of relief and thankfulness on the part of the Filipinos as well as the Spaniards. The people lining the road to Saul greeted Aguinaldo as a hero, while the Spanish officials treated him as a general.

At Saul, Aguinaldo and nineteen of his ranking officers boarded the British steamer *Uranus* on December 27, 1897, bound for Hong Kong.[1] Prior to the ship's departure, Aguinaldo dispatched a message to the Spanish Governor-General of the Philippines, Primo de Rivera. The phraseology does not convey any notion of continued resistance, but reveals the exiles' optimistic acceptance of the status quo.

> Those who were the Filipino rebels [said the message], on leaving the land of their birth, send their farewell greetings not without profound

> emotion and with tears in their eyes, leaving in the hands of Your Excellency the guardianship of their homes and the protection of the soil where first they saw the light of day.
>
> All are confident that Spain, impelled by right and justice, will grant reforms without bloodshed or combat, since so much blood has already stained the soil of Luzon--blood of heroes and martyrs now brothers in peace. Those who today offer themselves loyally to Spain recommend as the paternal policy of Your Excellency a real agreement between rights and liberty.
>
> May God bless and keep this peace for the honorable future of our beloved country, the Philippines, and for the prosperity and grandeur of the Spanish fatherland.[2]

Because there was no necessity for any message, one must conclude that Aguinaldo was initially prepared either to respect the tenets of the Biak-na-Bato Pact, or that this was an elaborate scheme to deceive the Spaniards. His optimistic attitude was based upon the Spaniards' verbal promise of reforms referred to in Aguinaldo's departing message. Although such promises were not legally binding upon the Spaniards, Aguinaldo relied upon a native belief in Spanish *pundonor*, or punctiliousness on questions of honor, to carry out the verbal as well as the written terms of the pact.[3]

The mention of reforms in the message suggests that they were at least discussed and perhaps promised. Such hopes had weighed heavily in the Filipino decision to negotiate with the Spaniards at Biak-na-Bato. The

naiveté of the Filipinos in not demanding that these promised reforms be put in writing is evident but understandable. There still existed strong cultural ties to Spain, which fostered tenacious confidence in the moral accountability of what Aguinaldo himself called the "Spanish fatherland."

The band of exiles landed in Hong Kong on December 31, 1897, and were met by Filipino residents who had fled the islands after 1872 and who were now established in the British Crown Colony.[4] Some of the old exiles had prospered through hard work and business deals. Although nationalistic, however, they did not possess the revolutionary background of the new arrivals and were suspicious of the young idealists, to whom they referred as "beggarly rebels." While they in turn were suspected by Aguinaldo's men, Aguinaldo himself realized the need for their support. They were rich and possessed valuable foreign contacts; their general adhesion to the revolutionary cause, represented by Aguinaldo, could win for the cause the confidence and support of the wealthy in the Philippines. Accordingly, they were not to be alienated; an effort was made to cultivate them, without

encouraging too active a participation or voice in revolutionary planning. With the progress of events a greater cleavage would occur between the two groups.[5]

On his arrival in Hong Kong, Aguinaldo's primary concern was the preservation of the money he had received in accordance with the agreement. On January 2, the first banking day of the year, Aguinaldo deposited the ₱400,000 in the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation under the name of Aguinaldo and Company, on a time deposit yielding 4 percent interest. Two days later, he withdrew half of the money and deposited it with the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China at 2 percent interest with the provision that he could withdraw ₱50,000 per quarter.[6] During the course of his transactions, Aguinaldo discovered that the second and third payments, each of ₱200,000, could be negotiated very profitably in the Crown Colony at an interest rate of 8 1/2 percent; therefore he urged his cousin Baldemero Aguinaldo, who was left behind in Biak-na-Bato, to remit the drafts without delay.[7] The money in the bank was increased by ₱18,582.90 between January 6 and February 16, and probably represented the proceeds from the treasury of the insurrection.[8]

Two significant points are involved in these transactions, apart from the dates of deposit. First, the money was deposited to the credit of Aguinaldo and Company; second, in arranging the bank transaction, Aguinaldo described the Philippines as an interior sovereignty (*soberanía interior*), established November 1, 1897. The initial full deposit would have allayed any fears on the part of Aguinaldo's companions as to his intended disposition of the money; the subsequent withdrawal gave Aguinaldo considerable financial flexibility. While the first point limited access to the money to Aguinaldo, the second demonstrates that Aguinaldo did not consider that the revolutionary government had ceased to exist. An "interior sovereignty" meant that its agents were concealed--the men who administered its powers did so secretly. This was an indication of the low value placed on the agreement of Biak-na-Bato,[9] and supports the allegation that a scheme was formulated in the mountain retreat to acquire arms at the expense of the Spaniards while gaining respite from the rigors of battle.[10]

There seems to be a contradiction to Aguinaldo's attitude as expressed by his departing telegram. At the time the Pact of Biak-na-Bato was concluded, the

Spaniards held the upper hand. Aguinaldo had no choice but to depart the Philippines. Perhaps overcome with a mixture of pride and respect for the Spanish culture, he optimistically and fatalistically phrased his farewell. There is no doubt that personally Aguinaldo held to his dream of independence, but due to the imposition of circumstances, he perhaps relegated his goal of independence to a secondary or futuristic possibility.

A strict budget was established for the exiles and a frugal existence was enforced by Aguinaldo. Every expense had to be reported to Aguinaldo, who meticulously noted the sums in his account book. The most trivial items--a pair of shoes, a new coat--had to be approved by the leader. For some of the men, this was a far cry from what they expected as exiles in Hong Kong. They were in a strange land where a foreign tongue was spoken; they had little to do except wait and hope for a chance to return to their homeland. Internal quarreling--a sign of their discontent--soon developed.[11]

Aguinaldo had misread the intent and character of the men he had left behind. Their trust in him and the revolutionary cause was not as lasting as he had

thought. The dissatisfaction manifested itself on December 29, 1897, two days after Aguinaldo's departure. Led by Isabelo Artacho, the rebels at Biak-na-Bato passed a resolution which defied the departed leaders. This attitude was the result of being left behind with no money, while the "less meritorious" were enjoying the use of the indemnity in Hong Kong. The authors of the resolution felt it impossible to carry on without alleviating their own financial plight. The resolution proposed that the second and third installments, totaling ₱400,000, be distributed to the most needy insurgents.[12]

Paciano Rizal, a respected insurgent leader, was selected to approach the Spaniards with this new proposal. Since the surrendering of rebels and arms was controlled by these men, de Rivera readily acceded to their petition.[13] The second installment was quickly, if not equitably, divided among the leaders left at Biak-na-Bato.

Pedro Paterno informed Aguinaldo of the resolution of December 29 and of the subsequent Spanish payment to the rebels at Biak-na-Bato. For Aguinaldo, the situation was fast deteriorating. There was discontent and division among the exiles in Hong Kong,

and open defiance of his leadership in the Philippines. Unless countermeasures were taken, the discontent in Hong Kong could also turn to defiance.[14]

With clever timing and brilliant utilization of information received from the Philippines, Aguinaldo repulsed the potential threat to his leadership and to the unity of the *Junta*. On February 14, 1898, Aguinaldo called a meeting of all the exiles in Hong Kong. They met at the Greenmount house--a sort of headquarters that was used as a gathering place for discussions and casual talk. He relayed to the assemblage Paterno's message describing the resolution of December 29. Aguinaldo then read a letter from Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Primo de Rivera, the nephew of the governor general, stating that the Spanish had no intention of making the third payment "as long as there was any revolt in the Philippines and the society of the *Katipunan* was not dissolved . . . ." The letter also dashed hopes of the return to the Philippines by any of the exiles.[15] Aguinaldo then announced that Artacho was resigning as secretary of the interior and director of commerce and was demanding reimbursement of ₱508.75 for miscellaneous expenses.[16]

The Hong Kong exiles reacted just as Aguinaldo would have wished. They believed that the Spaniards and Artacho's group were acting in bad faith. The assemblage agreed to repudiate the Biak-na-Bato agreement of December 19, 1897, and authorized Aguinaldo to take charge of the money, spending only the interest for living expenses. While they approved Artacho's resignation, they disapproved his demands for reimbursement. As a final act, the officials of the provisional government formed at Biak-na-Bato were replaced by individuals selected from the membership of the exiled group.[17]

This meeting represented the first action of the Hong Kong *Junta*. The reins of the provisional government were officially, if not actually, assumed by the rebels in Hong Kong. The *Junta* was no longer a purposeless band of exiles awaiting the outcome of a vague and tenuous agreement, but a concentration of serious Filipino leaders with a relatively large sum of money.

The exiled Filipino leadership, despite their initial display of conciliation and loyalty to Spain, had every intention of continuing the revolt. As early as November 3, 1897, when the peace terms of Biak-na-Bato were being negotiated, Filipe Agoncillo, appointed

as a representative of the revolutionists, and granted full powers of negotiation, had approached the United States Consul in Hong Kong, Rounseville Wildman, and proposed an alliance. Wildman reported to Secretary of State William R. Day: "Mr. Agoncillo offers on behalf of his government, alliance offensive and defensive with the United States when the United States declares war on Spain . . . ." The Filipino, he continued, desired arms and ammunition to be paid for "on recognition of his government by the United States." Two provinces and the customs house at Manila were pledged as security.[18] This offer was not taken seriously by the United States State Department. If Aguinaldo and his associates were acting in good faith with de Rivera, they would not have authorized Agoncillo to make the offer.[19]

T. Agoncillo, a Filipino historian, cites additional evidence of insurgent intentions found in a letter from the rebel general, José Alejandrino, to the renowned Filipinologist, Ferdinand Blumentritt: "In case peace is accepted it will only be for the money involved which we propose to use for the purpose of promoting immediately another decisive revolution."[20]

While the *Junta* was establishing itself in Hong Kong, events in the Philippines were not going smoothly for the Spanish. They were chagrined by continued clashes with the Filipinos but, as these flare-ups were scattered and unorganized, they were initially attributed to *tulisanes* (bandits). In a gesture of confidence, Primo de Rivera sent home 7,000 troops. After all, rebels were surrendering and turning in their arms.[21] Believing his mission accomplished, de Rivera submitted his resignation as governor-general. His optimism was premature; forces were already working against the truce. The friars, fearful of the truce, resorted to intrigues in an attempt to destroy the Biak-na-Bato agreement. They exploited the administration's fear of another uprising by reporting real and imagined native plots, and urged a harder, more uncompromising attitude in dealings with the natives. As time elapsed with no sign of reforms, the general populace gradually became suspicious of Spanish intentions. The suspicions became convictions when, in March, the popular daily *Diario de Manila* was suspended for demanding the introduction of reforms. People began to doubt the truce and began to suspect that de Rivera had duped the rebels.[22]

A general nervousness, especially on the part of the Spaniards, permeated Manila. It was noticed that former insurgents were secretly grouping. At the same time, the desertion rate among native recruits in the army was rising; in one case a whole company deserted its regiment.[23]

The authorities, reacting with neither tact nor gentleness, imprisoned all suspects. On March 25, the Spaniards massacred a boisterous group of Visayan sailors gathered in a house in Manila. The victims were thought to be conspiring.[24]

The uneasiness was heightened by the deterioration of Spanish-American relations. As early as January 20, 1898, Rivera received restricted information from the Spanish embassy in Washington. It revealed that in the event of war with the United States, the Philippines would be the first point of American attack.[25] General Basilio Augustin, who relieved Primo de Rivera on April 10, appealed to the Filipinos to fight for the Spaniards, just as they had done in the past.[26] Although the appeal attracted some volunteers, it was too late to organize a strong native based militia; the insurgents were encouraged by rumors of impending war between the United States and Spain.

The peace between the Filipinos and the Spaniards was soon broken. In Hong Kong, Aguinaldo asserted that de Rivera's failure to institute the promised reforms and pay the indemnity according to the terms of the agreement was reason enough to nullify the pact and resume the revolution. De Rivera retorted that reforms were never promised and that a check for ₱200,000 was turned over to his successor, for payment to the rebels; but there is no evidence that it was ever received.[27] Perhaps the Spaniards had realized the futility of buying loyalty, for they were very aware of the activities of the exiles, who were kept under strict surveillance by Spanish officials in Hong Kong.[28]

Mabini's assessment that "since both parties were acting in bad faith, one of them could not complain if the other broke its pledges," sums up the situation.[29] There is ample evidence of deceit and misunderstanding on both sides but, on the part of the Filipinos, the deceit was shrewdly planned, and could have been even more successful had it not been attended by greed, jealousy, and pride.

While Spain faced an imminent confrontation with the United States, Aguinaldo had to deal with

Isabelo Artacho, who had journeyed to Hong Kong to present his demands. Artacho's arrival in the Crown Colony posed a problem for Aguinaldo, and caused a rift within the ranks of the exiles. Artacho maintained that, as director of commerce, he had the right to dispose of the ₱400,000 held by Aguinaldo. The latter at first opposed the demand in silence, then flatly refused, revealing that Artacho's appointment was a ruse to deceive the Spaniards into thinking the money was to be used for a commercial venture.[30] This is another indication of Aguinaldo's planned double-cross of the Spaniards, though it is obvious that only a few of his closest associates were aware of the full intention.[31]

Artacho's demands were dangerous, as some of the exiles were greedily anticipating a division of the money; an accounting of the funds would have exposed the insurgents' activities, which were contrary to the spirit of the Filipino-Spanish truce. Infuriated by Aguinaldo's obstinacy, Artacho filed suit in the Hong Kong courts against Aguinaldo. An injunction was issued "to restrain the defendant [Aguinaldo] and each of them from dealing with or parting with the possession . . . $400,000, or any part thereof."[32] The

threat of exposing the *Junta's* purpose was now very real. Counseled by Filipe Agoncillo (his chief advisor), Aguinaldo, Colonel Gregorio del Pilar (his aide), and Lieutenant J. Leyba (his secretary) secretly departed Hong Kong for Singapore under assumed names on April 7, 1898.[33]

Prior to departing, Aguinaldo withdrew ₱50,000 from the bank, and handed over some signed checks to Vito Belarmino, whom he appointed his interim successor, advising him to spend only the interest for living expenses. As his reason for departure, Aguinaldo said he wanted to avoid Artacho and legal entanglements; he let it be known--presumably to discourage Artacho from following--that his destination was Europe and the United States.[34]

The *Junta* was divided in its feelings. While Artacho's demands and accusations had found some sympathetic ears, Aguinaldo's bank withdrawal and hurried, secret departure fueled the misgivings of the exiles. Two cliques developed: Aguinaldo's (the more powerful) and Artacho's. "Bitter enmity," writes Ricarte, "sprang up between these two factions which gnashed their teeth at each other when they met, but the Spanish-American War came and both reunited in a common cause."[35]

Artacho was left holding an "empty bag," for Belarmino proved just as uncooperative as Aguinaldo. Eventually, through the mediation of several respected members of the *Junta*, a meeting between Aguinaldo and Artacho was arranged for May 9, 1898. It was held in Hong Kong at the house of a friendly fellow countryman.[36]

Artacho now promised to withdraw his claim and to ask that the attachment on the Hong Kong and Chartered Banks be withdrawn. But, instead of keeping his promise, Artacho returned and demanded ₱40,000 which Aguinaldo refused. Artacho finally settled on a sum of ₱5,000, not as his share in the division of the fund, but as "alms." Realizing a good bargain, and anxious to be rid of Artacho, Aguinaldo gave him the ₱5,000. A new crisis, the Spanish-American War, had developed; it required Aguinaldo's full attention. He had to be able to move freely and to have ready access to the money in the Hong Kong banks and time was essential. No doubt this had been a decisive factor in his buying off Artacho.[37]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Filipino historians vary in their account of the number of people who accompanied Aguinaldo to Hong Kong. The figure of nineteen has been selected from Emilio Aguinaldo and Vicente Pacis, *A Second Look at America* (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1957), p. 28--presumably the most reliable source. Other figures ranging from twenty to forty-five may include hostages and Filipinos following or preceding Aguinaldo to Hong Kong. Agoncillo, *Malolos*, pp. 44, 683, quoting Joaquin Natividad, "The Pacto of Biak-na-Bato," *Philippine Free Press,* 13 December 1947, indicates twenty-four and names twenty.

[2]John R. M. Taylor, *The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States*, 5 vols. (Pasay City, Philippines: Eugenio Lopez Foundation, 1971), 1:426-27, extracts from correspondence of José Barrosso in *Imparcial*, Madrid, December, 1897.

[3]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:418, extract from *La Politica de España en Filipinas,* vol. 8, W. E. Retana; and Quirino, *The Young Aguinaldo,* p. 220.

[4]Governor General de la Torre, a liberal Spanish administrator, was relieved in 1871 by Rafael de Izquierdo (1871-1873), a reactionary unfriendly to the Filipinos, whom he regarded with suspicion (*personas sospechosas*). The change in administration, accompanied by a retraction of privileges, triggered the Cavite Mutiny and the consequent execution of three native priests. To escape persecution, several Filipinos fled to Hong Kong, where they continued to support the propaganda movement. T. A. Agoncillo and Oscar Alfonso, *History of the Filipino People* (Quezon City, Philippines: Malaya Books, 1967), pp. 142-43.

[5]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:95-96.

[6]U.S., War Department, Philippine Division, *Philippine Insurgent Records 1896-1901 With Associated Records of the United States War Department 1900-1906* (Microcopy #M254), 54.9 (hereafter cited as *PIR*).

[7]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:449, extract from *PIR*, 10.10.

[8]*PIR*, 54.9.

[9]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:93-94.

[10]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, pp. 73-74.

[11]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:95.

[12]Ibid., 1:451-55, extract from *PIR*, 53.3.

[13]Ibid., 1:451-53, extract from *PIR*, 53.3. José Salvador Natividad was chosen to approach de Rivera, but realizing the gravity of this action, he deferred to Paciano Rizal.

[14]Artemio Ricarte, *Memoirs of General Artemio Ricarte* (Manila: Manila National Heroes Commission, 1963), pp. 88-89.

[15]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:453, extract from *PIR*, 53.3. Lieutenant Colonel de Rivera was one of the hostages that accompanied Aguinaldo's band to Hong Kong. During this period he came to know the exiles, evidenced sympathy for their cause, and corresponded with them after he was returned to the Philippines.

[16]Ibid., 1:453.

[17]Ibid.

[18]U.S., Congress, Senate, *Consular Reports on Philippine Affairs*, S. Doc. 62, 55th Cong., 3d sess. (5 December 1898 to 3 March 1899), pt. 1, p. 334.

[19]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 73.

[20]Ibid., p. 75.

[21]Ibid., p. 67.

[22]Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, p. 548.

[23]Antonio Molina, *The Philippines Through the Centuries*, 2 vols. (Manila: U. S. T. Cooperative, 1961), 2:143.

[24]Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, pp. 550-56.

[25]Molina, *Philippines Through the Centuries*, 2:144.

[26]Ibid., 2:145-46.

[27]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:91.

[28]Molina, *Philippines Through the Centuries*, 2:139-41.

[29]Mabini, *Philippine Revolution*, p. 49.

[30]Ricarte, *Memoirs*, p. 88. The commercial board to which Artacho was appointed director was to start a commercial establishment in Hong Kong with the indemnity. Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:461.

[31]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 73.

[32]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:467, extract from *PIR*, 53.6.

[33]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, p. 31.

[34]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:97.

[35]Ricarte, *Memoirs*, p. 89.

[36]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:515, extract from *PIR*, 24.5.

[37]Ibid.

CHAPTER III

THE *JUNTA* IN OPERATION

Prior to Aguinaldo's departure for Singapore, the exiles had heard that war between the United States and Spain might break out at any time. Their course of action in case of hostilities was the subject of many far-reaching debates. The most popular plan was to employ the money in the Hong Kong banks for the purchase of arms to resume the revolution coincident with the outbreak of war.[1]

As usual, opinions were varied. Some suggested that an alliance be formed with Japan, but this was ruled out in view of the *Katipunan's* failure to enlist Japan's aid during the first phase of the revolution. An alliance with the United States was also rejected on the basis of the American reaction to Agoncillo's offer in late November, 1897.[2] Since the *Junta* members assumed the Spanish-American War would be confined to the Atlantic, direct assistance from the Americans seemed unlikely.[3] Spain's forces would be divided by the need to defend Cuba. If Spain sent reinforcements to the Philippines, the *Junta* assumed the United States Navy would intercept them.[4]

The arrival of an American Naval squadron in Hong Kong on February 17, 1898, startled Aguinaldo and his associates. It was only natural to connect the rumors of war with the movement of the squadron, and to assume that the force was on its way to Manila. Aguinaldo was even more surprised when he received a visit from Commander Wood, captain of the gunboat *Petrel*.[5]

Aguinaldo claims that this and subsequent meetings were held on or before April 6, in behalf of Commodore George Dewey. In their secret conversations, Commander Wood urged Aguinaldo to return to the Philippines, organize an army, and liberate the country; advice, arms, and ammunition would be supplied by the Americans. Wood also revealed American plans to engage the Spanish Fleet in Philippine waters.[6] Thereupon Aguinaldo asked Wood what the United States would do for the Philippines.

> The Commander answered that the United States was very great and rich and did not need colonies. In view of this, I [Aguinaldo] suggested to the Commander how much better it would be to have an agreement in writing, and he said that he would lay the matter before Admiral Dewey.[7]

Artacho's arrival in Hong Kong interrupted the meetings and forced Aguinaldo's flight to Singapore.

Aguinaldo, however, carried with him the idea of American aid--an idea which he nurtured and developed in Singapore.

Upon arriving in Singapore on April 23, 1898, Aguinaldo became the house guest of Dr. Isidoro de Santos, a fellow countryman. Although he was traveling *incognito*, he was anticipated by an Englishman, Howard W. Bray, who called at the de Santos residence on the twenty-third, inquiring for Aguinaldo. Bray, a former planter and businessman in the Philippines, claimed to be an old friend of Aguinaldo, and told Dr. Santos that the American consul general had an important message for the insurgent leader. Bray returned that evening and again next morning; each time de Santos denied Aguinaldo's presence. On a fourth visit, Aguinaldo finally consented to see Bray, who presented an urgent invitation to meet Consul E. Spencer Pratt of Singapore. Aguinaldo accepted, and a meeting was arranged for the evening of the twenty-fourth at "The Mansion," a secluded public house.[8]

At the meeting, Bray and Lieutenant J. M. Leyba served as interpreters, since Aguinaldo could not speak English fluently and Pratt knew no Spanish. From the outset it became apparent that Bray's concern

about United States-Philippine affairs was influenced by his personal interests. Some imply that Bray may have interpreted so as to suggest more than Pratt had intended to say.[9] Very possibly Bray's interpretations were shaded to reflect favorably upon his own motives. Nevertheless, Aguinaldo was a responsible leader and must take blame or credit for any misinterpretation.

A series of meetings followed, during which Aguinaldo and Pratt seem to have reached mutual agreement. The subsequent statements of each, however, differ as to what was said and promised. In a pamphlet written in 1899, Aguinaldo claimed that Pratt, after conferring with Admiral Dewey, agreed to

> recognize the independence of the Philippine government under a naval protectorate, but that there was no necessity to put it in writing, as the words of the admiral and the American consul were sacred and would be fulfilled . . . .

Pratt also promised aid in shipping arms to the Philippines.[10]

Pratt's version of his meetings with Aguinaldo is given in a letter to Secretary of State William R. Day, dated April 28, 1898. Supposedly, Pratt had explained his lack of authority to speak for the United States government, pointed out the danger of continuing independent action, and convinced Aguinaldo

of the expediency of cooperating with the American fleet. No mention was made of promises of recognition or independence.[11] In a subsequent letter dated April 30, Pratt wrote:

> The general [Aguinaldo] stated that he hoped the United States would assume protection of the Philippines for at least long enough to allow the inhabitants to establish a government of their own, in the organization of which he would desire American advice and assistance.
>
> These questions I told him I had no authority to discuss.[12]

After the first conference, Pratt cabled Dewey and requested a meeting with Aguinaldo in Hong Kong to arrange for cooperation between the insurgents and the Americans. The commodore replied: "Tell Aguinaldo come soon as possible."[13] Pratt succeeded in getting the Filipino on his way to Hong Kong aboard the British steamer *Malacca* a day later, April 26.

Pratt's enthusiasm over what he considered a diplomatic coup, exceeded the bounds of discretion. He allowed himself to be cajoled into addressing the Filipino residents of Singapore, who were celebrating the prospect of independence through American aid. Pratt's speech was reported in the *Straits Times* of Singapore, clippings of which he blithely enclosed in his reports to the State Department. The newspaper

openly alluded to Pratt's encouragement of the Filipino people in their struggle for independence, and praised him for his part in arranging the help of the United States. Primarily in response to this reporting, the State Department sent a letter, dated July 20, admonishing that Pratt's correspondence

> has occasioned a feeling of disquietude and a doubt as to whether some of your acts may not have borne a significance and produced an impression which this government would feel compelled to regret.

The reprimand made clear that the Department of State did not in any way sanction the views expressed in the press clippings or the specific arrangement between Pratt and Aguinaldo.[14]

Mr. Pratt was quietly separated from the consular service. His version remains the weak defense of an over-eager and misinformed official who embarrassed his government. Aguinaldo's account, whether true or fabricated, became the basis of a subtle and expanding propaganda campaign.

Bray, the interpreter of dubious character, found a new patron in Aguinaldo and aligned himself with the Filipino cause. He became an advisor to Aguinaldo and was in frequent correspondence with the insurgent leader. In a cablegram to the Republican

Senator George Frisbie Hoar, an anti-imperialist from Massachusetts, Bray asserted: "The conditions under which Aguinaldo promised to cooperate with Dewey were Independence under a protectorate. I am prepared to swear to [t]his."[15]

Bray's testimony was never taken seriously by the American officials, and the members of the *Junta* grew to mistrust him. How much he influenced Aguinaldo cannot be determined; however, Aguinaldo later ordered that he be given $5,000 for his services.[16] Evidence strongly suggests that he was dishonest and that what he wrote to Senator Hoar was an unscrupulous, selfish fabrication.[17]

Aguinaldo knew, or his advisors should have known, that a consul did not normally speak for the United States, and that even the president could not make treaties without the consent of the Senate. Aguinaldo's acceptance of whatever promises were made probably sprang not from naiveté or gullibility, but from a calculated desire to promote a sympathetic reaction and a unifying influence upon the Filipino people, while taking advantage of an unexpected chance to continue the revolution.

During Aguinaldo's absence, the members of the *Junta* were not idle. Señor Segismundo Moret, Spanish minister of the colonies in 1898, later testified before the Spanish *Cortés* that Navarro, the Spanish consul in Hong Kong, had been negotiating with the *Junta* regarding autonomy for the Philippines. Moret claimed that an agreement was reached and signed; but negotiations were abruptly terminated when the *Junta* learned of the promises of aid from the United States.[18] This reaction seems to have hardened the attitude of the Spaniards towards the Filipinos and ended any thought of granting reforms.

The prospect of a Spanish-American War and the resurgence of unrest in the Philippines was an opportunity the *Junta* encouraged. One circular signed Magdalo, Aguinaldo's code name, was apparently written in his name while he was still in Singapore. It read:

> To all the Filipino Insurgent Chiefs:
> BRETHEN [*sic*]: . . . I request you to prepare yourselves to fight our old enemies, and to use all means within your power to capture their forces, as the time is still ripe for the realization of our aspirations for the freedom of the country. You must go to fight without doubt, without hesitation, and before long I will not fail to be with you.[19]

Other circulars presented the insurgent viewpoint with regard to Spanish injustices.

The *Junta* had reached a point beyond which there would be no return. The members realized that their future actions would commit them to either war or conciliation with Spain. Primarily for the benefit of the Spaniards, the *Junta* presented in April, 1898, what could be termed an expression of national aspirations, establishing the minimum conditions under which they would live:

1. "A stable government elected by the people"
2. Taxes to be voted on by the people
3. Freedom of thought, association, and press
4. The "religion of the natives, and of those who may come to the country, to be scrupulously respected"
5. Christianity to be the "symbol and solid foundation of religious institutions, but without coercion or imposition"
6. The maintenance of the clergy as may be agreed upon by regional governments, municipalities, or popular elective institutions
7. "Absolute and unconditional respect of personal property," and recognition of exclusive rights of possession by tenants of the farms of religious orders

8. "Possession of . . . tenants [to] be respected" without their being required to pay any fee, rent, or tax of an oppressive character

9. Strengthening of the tenants' titles to property by preventing the Forest Bureau from searching for technicalities in titles of ownership

10. Public administration to be founded and operated "on the basis of morality, economy and competency, under the direction of the natives"

11. Recognition of human rights guaranteed by a judiciary

12. "Just codes adapted to our manner of life" and based on the principle of equality before the law

13. Growth and protection of industry by means of subsidies, local franchises, and freedom to trade with all nations

14. A liberal banking law, liberty of mercantile societies and companies, and commercial liberty

15. The building of roads, canals, and ports, and general improvement of all means of transportation and communication

16. Suppression of the *Guardia Civil* (Civil Guard) who trapped, tortured, and executed "so many Filipino martyrs"

17. Introduction of a judicial and administrative police system to replace the *Guardia Civil*

18. Formation of a "local army, composed of native volunteers, limited in number" to the requirements of public order and national defense

19. A system of public instruction, less clerical in nature, providing greater attention to the natural and positive sciences, educating females as well as males, and under a board of instruction free from religious overseeing

20. The founding of primary schools, high schools, normal schools, universities, museums, public libraries, model and experimental farms, zoological and botanical gardens

21. Promulgation of laws on hunting, fishing, and the preservation and utilization of natural resources

22. Free immigration and encouragement of colonists and foreign capitalists, the only limitations being in regard to "Chinamen"

The circular concluded:

> We wish in substance, all that is just, equitable and orderly; all that may be a means of development, prosperity and well-being; all that may be an effective promoting agency of morality, of virtue and respect for the mutual rights of all the inhabitants, in both their interior and foreign relations.[20]

The preceding desires represented a last attempt at reconciliation of the part of the Filipino insurgents. Spain, however, was preoccupied with the United States, and Cuba took precedence over the Philippine colony, which was by now a burden to the Crown. Spanish administrators showed open hostility and indifference towards reform. Their lack of tact, more than anything else, alienated the Filipinos and eroded any remnants of loyalty and sympathy.[21]

New ties were now sought by the dissidents; the circulars advocated a transference of allegiance to the United States. The exiles in Hong Kong, aware of the new options available through Aguinaldo's agreement with Pratt, prepared the people for a new ally, urging them to cooperate with the Americans and not to mistake them as enemies. They took pains to explain the religious views of the United States, and assured the natives that Americans were not anti-Catholic and possessed an ideal form of government which they should strive to emulate.

> Let us fight together; let us second the avenging and humane action of the Republic of North America, and learn from it, accepting its counsels and prescribed forms, the manner of living in order, peace and liberty, copying its institutions, which are the only suitable ones for the nations which desire to reconquer their personality in the history of the period through which we are now passing.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The protection of the great American Republic will make you respected and considered by all the legally constituted civilized powers.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Viva the Philippines! Viva Liberty and Justice! Viva the Great Republic of the United States of North America! Viva President McKinley and Rear-Admiral Dewey!"
>
> (Signed) "*La Junta Patriótica*"
> Hong Kong, April, 1898[22]

On April 25, Dewey received orders to proceed to the Philippine Islands and commence operations against the Spanish fleet. The admiral delayed his departure, however, as he was awaiting the arrival of Oscar F. Williams, the United States consul in Manila, who was bringing valuable intelligence.

While waiting for orders in Hong Kong, Dewey became acquainted with the local Filipinos. Dewey's subsequent testimony before a Senate Committee explains his relationship with the *Junta*:

> I saw these men two or three times myself. They seemed to be all very young earnest boys. I did not attach much importance to what they said or to themselves.

As for the Filipino leader, Dewey went on to say, ". . . I attached so little importance to Aguinaldo that I did not wait for him."[23]

At his first meeting, Dewey certainly did not take the Filipinos seriously. Their slight builds and youthful appearance belied their capabilities. Describing the period just prior to his departure for the Philippines, Dewey asserted:

> They [the Filipino exiles] were bothering me. I was getting my squadron ready for battle, and these little men were coming on board my ship at Hong Kong and taking a good deal of my time, and I did not attach the slightest importance to anything they could do . . . .[24]

The American squadron weighed anchor and sailed for Manila on April 27, taking one representative of the *Junta*, José Alejandrino, as a passenger aboard a supply ship. Alejandrino carried the circulars designed to prepare the people for Aguinaldo's return and for a fighting alliance with the Americans against the Spaniards.[25]

Several circulars were written by José M. Basa, a leader among the wealthy Filipino exiles in Hong Kong. Since Basa was influential among the wealthy and educated in the Philippines, these documents were expected to have great impact. Besides espousing close

support of American forces, Basa's pamphlets suggested annexation of the islands. "This is the best opportunity which we have ever had," Basa stated in one of them,

> for contriving that our country (all the Philippine Archipelago) may be counted as another Star in the Great Republic of the United States, great because of its wealth, and its constitutional laws.
>
> Now is the time to offer ourselves to that great nation. With America we shall have development in the broadest sense (of advancement) in civilization.
>
> With America we shall be rich, civilized and happy.[26]

Basa's stance, however, reflected neither Aguinaldo's policy nor that of all the members of the *Junta*. Dewey's cool and superior attitude toward the exiles was not overlooked by these sensitive men. Many of them questioned the intentions of America and suspected imperialism lurking behind the actions of the United States. But because they needed American as well as Filipino support, they prepared for the emergency in a most deceitful manner.

Basa's broadsides were never disseminated. Instead a new circular marked by his initials (J. M. B) was prepared and distributed to convey a warning to the revolutionary leaders in the Philippines.

> . . . we infer that they [the Americans] are trying to make colonies of us, although they said they would give us independence. The Committee [*Junta*] decided it advisable to simulate belief at the same time equipping ourselves with arms . . . .
>
> A part of our forces will aid the Americans by fighting with them in order to conceal our real intentions, and part will be held in reserve. If America triumphs and proposes a colony we shall reject such offer and rise in arms.[27]

Taylor suspects that this document was a forgery, as the initials were not in Basa's handwriting. This suspicion is supported by Basa's subsequent petitions to the United States for annexation of the Philippines and citizenship for his family. Probably Aguinaldo could not afford to alienate Basa and his followers by refusing to authorize the distribution of his circulars but he could allow them to be sent and then secretly discarded. By forging a new document, Aguinaldo could exploit Basa's influence. Basa would not discover the deceit until too late, for he remained in Hong Kong.[28] It was a twofold deception of the United States and the Filipinos.

This was a period of doubt and insecurity for Aguinaldo. He was not certain of his reception in the Philippines. The defiance of his leadership by the men left behind, and the rumors filtering into Hong Kong that the people questioned his honesty and

loyalty, were disquieting and shook his determination. When he reached Hong Kong from Singapore he discovered, to his dismay, that Dewey had left without him. The hopes built up in Singapore had sailed with the American squadron.

Aguinaldo and his companions arrived in Hong Kong on May 1 under assumed names; only trusted members of the *Junta* were allowed to know where he took up residence. His uncertainty regarding the attitude of his followers lay behind this secrecy. His popularity had not increased since his departure from Hong Kong; some of the members still accused him of deserting to Europe with their money. To try to mend the breach Teodoro Sandico, a close friend of Aguinaldo and a spokesman for the *Junta*, who was selected to act as go-between, arranged a meeting for May 4.

In the meantime, Consul Rounseville Wildman, apprised of Aguinaldo's arrival, met the insurgent chief and informed him that Dewey had left instructions for Aguinaldo to return to the Philippines.[29] The news partially assuaged Aguinaldo's disappointment over Dewey's departure. The meeting with Wildman, like the meeting with Pratt, is clouded by conflicting accounts. According to Edwin Wildman, brother to the consul,

Aguinaldo was anxious to become an American citizen but, as this was impossible, he desired to return to the Philippines to work for Dewey. He made no demands for independence; indeed, he hoped the Americans would annex the Philippines. He promised the consul he would fight on the side of the United States and not attempt to foment a revolution against them; he would abide by the decision of the United States as to the final disposition of the Philippines. His overriding aim was to throw off the Spanish yoke.[30]

Aguinaldo claims that at the conference

> . . . I talked with the Consul about the expedition of arms which I had in mind, and we agreed that the said Consul and the Filipino, Sr. Teodoro Sandico, were to be left in charge of the expedition, I turning over that same night to the said gentlemen the sum of 50,000 pesos on deposit.[31]

In subsequent conferences, Wildman advised Aguinaldo "to establish a Philippine government in a dictatorial form."[32] He explained that it was the best system for carrying out a war. After the war Aguinaldo could establish a government based upon the American model.[33]

Despite the assurances of Wildman, Aguinaldo still faced the problem of setting his own house in order; the *Junta* had to be united under his leadership, and a concrete plan of action developed. The *Junta*

gathered on May 4 to decide on the steps to be taken in the wake of Dewey's victory over the Spanish fleet on May 1, and to hear Aguinaldo's version of the conferences with Pratt and Wildman.

At the *Junta* meeting, Filipe Agoncillo announced Aguinaldo's arrival in Hong Kong and suggested that he take over as president. After this was agreed upon, Aguinaldo was permitted to join the conference and was administered the oath of office. He then recounted his negotiations with Pratt and Wildman, claiming that he was not satisfied with his interviews with the latter. In the end he requested the advice of the *Junta* on the wisdom of returning to the Philippines.

The arguments in favor of his return were expressed by Sandico and Agoncillo, who stressed that Aguinaldo's prestige was essential to the unity of the people and that he alone could prevent dissension. Nevertheless, Aguinaldo still balked at returning; he feared that Dewey would force him to subscribe to "unpatriotic proposals," and that, if he refused, the break between them would become obvious to all. Aguinaldo was also afraid that the American admiral would refuse to furnish arms, without which he would be

powerless to organize the people; the Spaniards, in fact, would demand the return of the ₱400,000. Sandico and others reassured Aguinaldo on these points, as they were convinced the Americans would cooperate and supply arms because they needed the help of the insurgents. Since the *Junta* anticipated a possible conflict with the United States, it considered this a good opportunity to obtain arms at the expense of the Americans.

The members of the *Junta* remained adamant and continued to press their arguments, reasoning that if the Americans remembered the principles expressed in their own constitution, they would neither colonize nor annex the Philippines. The latter would probably be given its independence, guaranteed by America. In such a case, Aguinaldo should leave immediately, in order to be on hand to prevent a scramble for position among the more ambitious insurgent leaders and to establish a suitable government. Any delay in Aguinaldo's return, the *Junta* argued, could be attributed to a lack of patriotism and considered a criminal weakness that would destroy the hard-won reputation of the president.[34]

The pressure was irresistible; Aguinaldo decided to return to the Philippines. On May 7, the

revenue cutter *McCulloch* arrived in Hong Kong but, since its captain had not received instructions to convey Aguinaldo, the insurgent chief was refused passage. Aguinaldo's return to the Philippines by way of an American warship was crucial to the *Junta's* plans, and important psychologically. His arrival at Cavite, aboard a vessel that was part of the victorious American fleet, would enhance his prestige and credibility; it would support his reputation as an unconquerable general who led a charmed life protected by an *anting-anting*.[35] This action would also represent an outward show of support by the Americans for the Filipinos, would generate confidence among the people, and validate the theme of the circulars previously distributed. Additionally, a bold and dramatic homecoming backed by the armed forces of a great nation would insure a multitude of volunteers with which to rebuild the insurgent armies.

An important aspect of Aguinaldo's preparations for returning to the Philippines was the securing of arms. For this, Aguinaldo depended upon Wildman, who zealously took charge of the project. The consul was initially given ₱50,000 for the shipment of arms to the Philippines; before departing, Aguinaldo handed

him an additional ₱67,000 to buy and ship a second consignment.

The first shipment of arms, consisting of 2,000 Mauser rifles and 200,000 cartridges, was delivered, but the second--according to Aguinaldo, at least--was never received. "Mr. Wildman did not comply with this last trust, keeping the said sum of money [₱67,000], which he refuses to return, according to my advices."[36]

Edwin Wildman's account of the period states only that Aguinaldo concluded arrangements to purchase "three thousand stand of arms" in Hong Kong, which were landed in Cavite.[37] The consul did not report any arms purchases, or his dealings with the insurgents, until July 18, 1898.[38] This may have reflected his reaction to instructions previously received after he reported Agoncillo's offer of alliance in November, 1897; at that time, the State Department instructed him to refuse to be the vehicle of any such offers.[39]

On July 25, 1898, Wildman wrote Aguinaldo that the United States had undertaken the war solely to relieve the Cubans from the cruelties they were suffering and not for the love of conquest or the hope of gain. He also stated that America could be trusted to deal with him with honor and justice. The State

Department promptly telegraphed Wildman: "Your action disapproved and you are forbidden to make pledges or discuss policy."[40] Nevertheless, the consul continued to advise and encourage Aguinaldo.[41] Such action was not only irregular, but also unethical. Like Pratt, he did not seem to be attuned to the attitude of the State Department towards the Philippines. Possibly, as Aguinaldo suggested, he was seeking personal gain or glory.[42]

Once again, Aguinaldo had refused to recognize that consuls were not diplomatic agents, and that whatever they said in public or in private was their own opinion and did not necessarily represent the view of the American government. Such an interpretation, however, suited the strategy that underlay Aguinaldo's fierce campaign for Filipino independence.

In mid-May, 1898, the *McCulloch* returned to Hong Kong; this time Aguinaldo was permitted passage. Wildman made the arrangements, insisting upon stealth and secrecy, for he wanted to avoid the suspicion of the Spanish consul and censure by the neutral British authorities who controlled the port. The *McCulloch* departed the British Crown Colony on the morning of May 17, with Aguinaldo and thirteen of his followers

and arrived at Cavite two days later. True to his promise, Aguinaldo had returned.[43]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, pp. 29-30.

[2]Ibid.; U.S., Congress, Senate, *Consular Reports*, p. 334; and see also Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:472.

[3]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, p. 30.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:449, extract from *Reseña Verídica de la Revolución Filipina, por Don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy, Presidente de la República Filipina*, 2d ed., printed in Nueva Caceres, 1899. This pamphlet is in the Library of Congress. Portions of the original manuscript filed in the *Philippine Insurgent Records* are in the handwriting of Filipe Buencamino, a revolutionary and historian of the period. References to this meeting will be found in Filipino texts, which utilize the *Reseña Verídica*, but not usually in U.S. texts. The value of the source is questionable; many of the facts cannot be proven, and errors are numerous. Some believe that Aguinaldo composed this pamphlet purely for propaganda purposes.

[6]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, pp. 30-31. It is questionable whether these meetings took place but, if so, it is highly improbable that Commander Wood divulged the plans of the fleet to Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo was not certain of Wood's name: "The *Petrel* commander, whose name was, I think, Captain Wood . . . ."

[7]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:445, extract from *Reseña Verídica*; and Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, p. 31.

[8]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, pp. 32-33.

[9]Dean C. Worcester, *The Philippines Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 96; and Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:98.

[10]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:446, extract from *Reseña Verídica*. Aguinaldo also recounts his meetings with Pratt in a subsequent book, *A Second Look at America*, 1957. There are discrepancies between the two accounts; since the *Reseña Verídica* was written much nearer in time to the events reported, it seems likely that it is the more accurate of the two.

[11]U.S., Congress, Senate, *Consular Reports*, Despatch No. 212, p. 341.

[12]Ibid., Despatch No. 213, pp. 342-43.

[13]Ibid., Despatch No. 212, p. 341.

[14]Ibid., Despatch No. 87, p. 356. An excellent analysis of Aguinaldo's meeting with Pratt is contained in James H. Blount, *American Occupation of the Philippines 1898-1912* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), chap. 1, "Mr. Pratt's Serenade," et seq.

[15]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:488, extract from *PIR*, 453.4.

[16]Ibid., 1:98.

[17]*PIR*, 406.5, Letter from St. Clair to Bray; *PIR*, 398.9, Letter from Bray to Aguinaldo; and Worcester, *Philippines Past and Present*, pp. 105-106, compares and analyzes the two letters.

[18]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:16-17. Moret's testimony took place in May, 1902.

[19]Ibid., 1:491, extract from *PIR*, 54.2.

[20]Ibid., 1:495-98, extract from *PIR*, 888.6.

[21]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 82.

[22]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:493, 499, 500, extract from *PIR*, 888.6.

[23]U.S., Congress, Senate, *Hearings on Affairs in Philippine Islands*, S. Doc. 331, 57th Cong., 1st sess. (2 December 1901 to 1 July 1902), pt. 3, p. 2927.

[24]Ibid., p. 2932.

[25]LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:180.

[26]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:523, extract from *PIR*, 1204.10.

[27]Ibid., 1:525, extract from *PIR*, 507.7.

[28]Ibid., 1:521-25, extract from *PIR*, 1204.10, 507.7. This last circular was initialed J. M. B.

[29]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, p. 35. However, in Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:474, extract from correspondence of R. Wildman, U.S. Consul in Hong Kong, S. Doc. 62, Wildman claims: "It was May 16 before I could obtain permission from Admiral Dewey to allow Aguinaldo to go by the United States ship *McCulloch . . . .*"

[30]Edwin Wildman, *Aguinaldo* (Boston: Lothrop Publishing Co., 1901), p. 72.

[31]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:448, extract from *Reseña Verídica.*

[32]Ibid.

[33]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, p. 36.

[34]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:505-10, extract from *PIR*, 53.2.

[35]Ibid., 1:101-102.

[36]Ibid., 1:448, extract from *Reseña Verídica.*

[37]Wildman, *Aguinaldo*, p. 84.

[38]LeRoy, *Americans in the Philippines*, 1:183. Consul Wildman accidentally drowned in San Francisco Bay in 1901.

[39]U.S., Congress, Senate, *Consular Reports*, pp. 333-34.

[40]Ibid., pp. 338-40.

[41]U.S., Congress, Senate, Address to the Congress of the United States by Filipe Buencamino on 20 August 1899, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 2 June 1902, *Congressional Record*, vol. 35, pt. 6, p. 6180. Enclosures with this address consisted of letters from Wildman to Aguinaldo concerning arms, Spanish prisoners, and the general conduct of the war.

[42]Ibid. Aguinaldo claims in his *Reseña Verídica* that both consuls were offered rewards for their assistance.

[43]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:103.

CHAPTER IV

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT: BETWEEN TIGERS AND LIONS

The complexion of the *Junta* changed when Aguinaldo departed from Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, Aguinaldo had been recognized for his leadership but was not always fully supported. Mainly through force of character and control of funds, he had succeeded in keeping the *Junta* together. Although the bond was tenuous, it was enough to promote his ambitions. Basic differences, scarcely submerged during Aguinaldo's presence, surfaced as soon as the *McCulloch* had dropped below the horizon.

The men close to Aguinaldo, committed to independence, formed the "inner circle" of the *Junta*. The early exiles in Hong Kong--wealthy and influential --constituted the "outer circle," which desired the annexation of the Philippines by America, or the status of a protectorate. Since their financial support and influence were needed desperately, Aguinaldo courted them. They expressed their desires and wrote circulars, in the belief that they were influencing

policies. Aguinaldo, however, never allowed them to say much about the plans of the *Junta*.

Wildman reported on May 6, and again on the fourteenth that Cortés, Basa, Rosario, and Gonzaga, patriarchs of wealthy Filipino families in Hong Kong, offered their fortunes to the United States and desired to become American citizens.[1] Not content to express their desires to Wildman, these men sent cables to Senator Marcus Alonzo Hanna of Ohio, imploring him in the name of "humanity" and "Christianity" to aid in obtaining annexation.[2] Cabling President McKinley on August 8, Basa claimed that well-to-do, educated Filipinos prayed for a protectorate or annexation.[3] Some may have proclaimed allegiance to insure their interests. Agoncillo wrote Aguinaldo that

> Máximo Cortés gave ₱10,000 to the American Consul [Wildman] . . . because the latter promised him to write to the Admiral [Dewey] not to bombard his real estate in Manila.[4]

Since many of the wealthy Filipinos in Hong Kong believed that Aguinaldo was fighting for annexation to the United States, they contributed money through the *Junta*. Although Aguinaldo had no intention of using the donations for that purpose, neither he nor the *Junta* were about to question the ethics of

accepting the money, for they needed all the help they could get. The *Junta's* money was banked in time deposit, and only ₱50,000--the money Aguinaldo withdrew before leaving for Singapore--was immediately available to the insurgents.[5]

When it became clear that Aguinaldo's goal was independence, most of the wealthy exiles withdrew their financial support. A few continued to align themselves with Aguinaldo and contributed what they could as evidence of their preference for independence rather than annexation. The *Philippine Insurgent Records* register a donation of ₱7,000 to the Hong Kong *Junta* by Juana Montilla from Visaya. In another instance, a rich Ilongo, Esteban de la Rama, donated twelve rifles and twelve revolvers to the *Junta* for shipment to the Philippines.[6]

The "insiders" did not view the activities of the "outsiders" with much alarm, for they believed erroneously that the influence of the wealthy Filipinos was minimal. Consul Wildman wrote to the Department of State from Hong Kong in July, 1898:

> I believe I know the sentiments of the political leaders and of the moneyed men among the insurgents, and, in spite of all statements to the contrary, I know that they are fighting for annexation to the United States first, and for

> independence secondly, if the United States decides to decline the sovereignty of the islands. In fact I have had the most prominent leaders call on me and they would not raise one finger unless I could assure them that the United States intended to give them United States citizenship if they wished it.[7]

Wildman believed that the wealthy exiles were the leaders of the *Junta* or, at the very least, wielded tremendous influence. His conclusion was incorrect but, since he was a respected and presumably responsible official, the impact of his evaluation affected the cause of the insurgents.

The responsibility of keeping the *Junta* together was inherited by Filipe Agoncillo. He was by far the most capable man among those left in Hong Kong, and he was loyal to Aguinaldo's purpose. Agoncillo was not at this time concerned about the actions of the wealthy Filipinos, for he was immediately confronted with a challenge from within the inner circle. His first letter to Aguinaldo on May 27, 1898, complained that "Sandico is bitterly criticising me to our companions."[8] In the same letter, but dated the next day, Agoncillo added "that Sandico, induced by the friends of Artacho, has for some time past been criticising me to the companions."[9] Sandico and several companions, he continued, had resigned from the

Junta with the intention of establishing another committee composed of the friends of Artacho.

Sandico's friendship and sympathy for Artacho were reprehensible to Agoncillo, who believed that Artacho was a greedy opportunist and traitor. Another area of disagreement was the procurement and shipment of arms and ammunition. Confident that the consul could assure the safety and success of the shipment, Sandico and his followers wanted the arms sent through Wildman. On the other hand, Agoncillo and his group were opposed to the use of a middleman, particularly a third-party alien. Agoncillo reasoned:

> As far as politics are concerned, is it advisable that the consul should know the number of arms sent which will enable him to estimate our strength? I think it is not. Though I am of the opinion that we should pay the consul every respect, still I believe that we should not belittle ourselves to the extent of being in a relation of a child to a guardian, because such being the case, what will he think of us and what information shall he give to his government?[10]

Apparently Agoncillo confronted Sandico and won him over. Sandico withdrew his resignation, and presumably a meeting to establish another revolutionary committee never occurred.[11] Confrontations of this sort were annoying to Agoncillo, who expressed his distaste to Aguinaldo:

> I will not state at length everything which has happened here, because I do not wish you to become disgusted. But I can tell you that there are many here with great and selfish ambitions.[12]

Agoncillo's concern to maintain the unity and effectiveness of the *Junta* transcended his personal feelings about the actions of Sandico's faction. Agoncillo's group[13] held the positions of power within the *Junta*, while Sandico's group, although capable of destructively splitting the *Junta*, was not strong enough to usurp Agoncillo's power. Because of loyalty to Aguinaldo and of the importance of the *Junta* to the revolutionary cause, Agoncillo never made an overt move against Sandico or his followers. Slight appeasement was preferable to the destruction of the *Junta*. Steering clear of an open clash with Sandico, Agoncillo did not demand an accounting of the funds used in the first arms-buying operation. At the direction of Aguinaldo, the *Junta* reluctantly assigned another ₱50,000 to Sandico for the purchase of more war materials.

The first arms transaction arranged by Sandico had ended in disaster. He had entrusted nearly ₱47,000 to an American in Hong Kong for the purchase of arms which were never bought. The money could not be recovered, for such transactions were illegal and

the British regarded arms as contraband of war. Some members of the *Junta* suspected Sandico of taking part of the money. On May 30, Agoncillo wrote to Aguinaldo that many of the members had no confidence in Sandico, and ended his letter with the comment that "those who work in good faith in this world, never seem to have luck, but it is the rascal who enjoys success."[14] It is clear that the "rascal" Agoncillo referred to was Sandico.

Despite the *Junta's* views, Sandico arranged a second transaction through an intermediary to whom he paid ₱60,000 for 2,000 rifles and 200,000 rounds of ammunition. The arms were extremely expensive; included in their cost was the price of the transport vessel and a staggering ₱12,673 commission for the middleman. In June, 1898, Sandico sailed with the arms to Cavite, fearing for his life; the companions sent with him by the *Junta* were Filipinos who believed he was a traitor. Although his worries were justified, Sandico succeeded in delivering the arms.[15]

Despite such internal problems, the *Junta* procured and shipped more arms to the Philippines. Belarmino reported on June 7, that two consignments consisting of 9,000 rifles and 3,000 cartridges were

scheduled to reach the Philippines shortly, but two cannon were left behind in the haste to get the shipment underway.[16]

By the middle of June, the *Junta's* ability to ship arms was severely hampered, this time from an outside source. The Spanish consul, keeping a close watch, protested the action of the *Junta* to the Hong Kong authorities. This forced the British officials to take action; they subsequently uncovered a cache of arms and ammunition intended for the Philippines.[17] This violation of British neutrality resulted in a prohibition of Filipino movement to and from the Crown Colony. Even the American consular launch was searched en route to visit vessels in the harbor.[18] Nevertheless, the Hong Kong *Junta* struggled on.

In view of the increased vigilance of the British authorities and the difficulty in procuring war materials in Hong Kong, the *Junta* began to explore other sources of arms. Agoncillo appointed two trusted men, Mariano Ponce and Faustino Lichauco, to go to Japan to ascertain the possibility of enlisting assistance. When the Japanese proved amenable to the idea of selling arms, Ponce and Lichauco made arrangements for the purchase and requested money from the

Hong Kong *Junta*. The original order was for ₱30,000, which was quickly made available; but the cost of a schooner to transport weapons left only enough money to purchase 1,000 rifles. Since the cost of transportation was fixed, Ponce realized the economy of increasing the size of the shipment and accordingly requested additional funds. Through an oversight, the check which the *Junta* sent to Japan was not transferable, and could only be cashed in Hong Kong on the due date. The remittance had to be returned and exchanged for cash. In the meantime, the Japanese, who were ready to conclude the transaction, requested ₱200,000 to be deposited in the Yokohama Specie Bank. Since the Filipinos in Yokohama did not have this sum, they delayed, waiting for the cash to arrive from Hong Kong. Meanwhile, open hostilities had broken out between American and Filipino forces. Thereupon the Japanese, not wishing to be involved, suspended the transaction.[19]

Open help from Japan could not be expected as long as the United States was involved with the Philippines. Active assistance of the Filipino insurgents, especially with United States forces in the Philippines, would surely be interpreted as a sign

of belligerency to the United States, a nation with which Japan had no desire to go to war.[20]

Two more feckless attempts were made to purchase guns from the Japanese. In April, 1899, a vessel loaded with arms sank in a typhoon a hundred miles from Shanghai. A second shipment could not be landed in the Philippines due to the vigilance of American coastal patrols, now alert to Filipino attempts to import arms. It was diverted to Formosa and eventually transferred to the Chinese mainland where it fell into the hands of supporters of the Chinese revolutionary, Sun Yat-sen.[21]

Despite its officially neutral policy, Japan did support the Filipino cause. A number of Japanese veterans of the Sino-Japanese War volunteered to fight for the Filipinos; cloth, uniforms, and a few weapons were also obtained. Newspapers and officials were generally in favor of Philippine independence; a few even criticized alleged American imperialism.[22] Japanese sympathy, enthusiasm, and involvement nevertheless remained on an individual, personal level.

While the *Junta* was struggling to obtain more arms for Aguinaldo, the insurgent leader was solidifying his power among the people. The arms already

received and the local support he was attracting gave him a degree of independence from the Americans blockading Manila Bay. Time was essential, however; the arrival of American reinforcements would undermine Aguinaldo's bargaining position--the main strength of which was Aguinaldo's control of land forces necessary to maintain the siege of Manila. From May 21 to May 24, Aguinaldo issued orders for an uprising against Spain. On the twenty-fourth, he proclaimed himself dictator, promising to relinquish his power to a president and cabinet appointed by a constitutional assembly as soon as the islands were under his control.[23]

The first American troops sailed from San Francisco on May 25, approximately a month before they reached their destination. During this time Aguinaldo had to obtain control of Spanish territory upon which to establish a government sufficient to convince the Americans of the legitimacy of his leadership. The Hong Kong *Junta* and Aguinaldo would then ask for the recognition of their government.[24]

Ultimate success was dependent upon the Filipinos' ability to convince foreign governments of their ability to rule themselves. Foremost among

those whom they wanted to impress was the United States, whose recognition, the Filipino leaders believed, would contribute to world acceptance. A republican form of government was chosen for its appeal to the American people. The Philippines would become the first Christian Asiatic republic, a nomenclature which was expected to elicit sympathy from America.

Throughout May and the early part of June, the insurgents were extremely successful. Eager volunteers flocked to their standard. On June 12, 1898, at Cavite Viejo, Aguinaldo proclaimed the independence of the Philippines.[25] He was convinced that there was tremendous propaganda value in such action; the people would now have a real cause and would be inspired to fight the Spaniards all the more fiercely.[26] Aguinaldo's successes and rapidly growing military strength gave him confidence and influenced his decision to remove doubts as to his real intentions.[27]

Further insight into Aguinaldo's reason for proclaiming Philippine independence at this time is presented by Mabini, who had been just introduced to him:

> The American representatives had limited themselves to ambiguous verbal promises, which Mr. Aguinaldo had accepted because he ardently desired to return to the islands, fearful that other influential Filipinos should (rob him of glory and) reach an understanding with the Americans in the name of the people.

In this same statement, Mabini also criticized Aguinaldo's decision.

> I realized also that the proclamation of independence which was being made that day was premature and imprudent because the Americans were concealing their true designs while we were making ours manifest. I foresaw, of course, that because of this want of caution the American commanders and forces would be on guard against the revolutionists, and the United States consuls on the China coast would sabotage the purchase of arms for the revolution.[28]

With the establishment of a dictatorial government and the proclamation of Philippine independence, the Hong Kong *Junta* was assigned additional duties. Its location in the British Crown Colony facilitated contact with foreign countries. The *Junta* was still a collection of the more educated and capable Filipino nationalists who, due to the political state of affairs, could not conveniently return home. Since, in the establishment of a government, Aguinaldo would need a corps of representatives, the exiles in Hong Kong would be logical and convenient choices. Agoncillo, the head of the *Junta*, was recognized as

one of the ablest diplomats among the insurgents. Crucial to Aguinaldo's plans was the task of drawing the United States into an open alliance and other foreign powers into a sympathetic recognition of Filipino belligerency. It was Aguinaldo's intention to utilize the Hong Kong *Junta* to accomplish this end. After setting up a central government, his next objective was to gain the attention of the foreign powers; recognition, he felt sure, would eventually follow.

On June 23, 1898, Aguinaldo issued a decree which established the Department of Foreign Relations, consisting of three bureaus--Diplomacy, Navy, and Commerce. The first bureau was to

> consider and dispatch all the business which pertains to the direction of diplomatic negotiations with other powers, and the correspondence of this government with the same.

In addition,

> the Government shall establish a Revolutionary Committee abroad, composed of an undetermined number of the most competent persons of the Philippine Archipelago.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The Delegation of Diplomacy shall take steps for and negotiate with foreign cabinets the recognition of the Philippine belligerency and independence.[29]

This committee was designed to take charge of what could only be called a "propaganda corps."

Following an early suggestion made by Agoncillo,[30] Aguinaldo wrote to him on August 7, 1898, with instructions to go to the United States as soon as possible,

> so that McKinley's government may know our true situation. Make him understand that our country has its own government, that civil organizations exist in the provinces already taken and soon the congress of representatives of these provinces will meet. Tell them that they cannot do with the Philippines as they wish, because many misfortunes may happen both to us and to them if we do not come to an agreement as to our future relations.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> A letter for President McKinley is herewith sent to you, so that he may recognize you as my representative. . . . When congress shall have been assembled and said arrangements made, I will send you your proper credentials.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The policy which you will pursue in the United States is the following:
>
> Make them understand that whatever may be their intentions towards us, that it is not possible for them to overrule the sentiments of the people represented by the government, and they must first recognize it if we are to come to an agreement. Still do not accept any contracts or give any promises respecting protection or annexation, because we will see first if we can obtain independence. This is what we shall endeavor to secure meanwhile if it should be possible to do so, still give them to understand in a way that you are unable to bind yourself but that once we are independent we will be able to make arrangements with them.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I have entire confidence in your recognized ability and wisdom which I also knew when we were companions, and I hope you will now pull all your moral courage together, because we will be between tigers and lions. Still, I believe you will be able to snatch our people away from their clutches.[31]

Agoncillo was also instructed to publish the "Act of Proclamation of Independence" and the "Manifesto to Foreign Governments" in the Hong Kong papers.[32] On August 10, Aguinaldo again urged Agoncillo to leave for America immediately, and to leave the *Junta* to others.[33] On the same day Aguinaldo penned instructions for Sandico and, in order to legitimize the Hong Kong *Junta*, he issued a decree making the *Junta* a permanent and official body. Sandico was instructed, first, to unify all Filipino subjects in Hong Kong and to persuade those of contrary opinions to cooperate in the government's (Aguinaldo's) policy; second, to prepare and organize the Revolutionary Committee; and, third, to struggle for independence while maintaining good terms with Washington,

> entreating the recognition of the Filipino Government under pretext that such recognition constitutes a *sine qua non* before any terms of agreement between the United States and "the Philippines."

Sandico was to seek an alliance with the United States even if the Carolines and Marianas had to be sacrificed, but protection or annexation were to be considered acceptable only if independence by force of arms or diplomacy was impossible. Agoncillo was also

to maintain communication with correspondents in Paris and London, and negotiate with foreign commercial houses.[34]

Aguinaldo's decree legitimizing the *Junta* listed himself as head of the Department of Foreign Affairs under which was established a managing board, members, and correspondents. Don Vicente Ilustre, a Filipino living in Paris, was appointed president of the board, and Sandico secretary. The members were all residents of Hong Kong. Correspondents were appointed to various foreign countries: Pedro P. Roxas to France, Antonio Regidor to England, and Filipe Agoncillo to the United States.[35]

While the managing board represented the government abroad, it required special authority to conclude treaties. The board administered the funds of the government abroad, and recommended the appointment of correspondents in foreign countries. Further duties of the board encompassed all work of propaganda abroad, all diplomatic negotiations, and the preparation of expeditions necessary for the revolution.[36] Under the guidance of Aguinaldo's decrees, the Hong Kong *Junta* functioned as a listening post for the

revolutionary government, a procurement office for war materials, and a propaganda agency.

Many of the appointments seem political in nature; they did not facilitate a smooth operation, but promoted unity and loyalty to Aguinaldo's government. Since many appointed to membership and offices within the committee were absent, Aguinaldo issued another decree on August 24; it recreated the Revolutionary Committee at Hong Kong, specifically outlining its duties, defining its powers, and specifying its composition.[37]

In addition, by a decree dated November 23, 1898, Aguinaldo created a commission

> charged with informing the civilized world of the true political and social condition of the country and of the capability of the Filipinos to govern themselves, as also to petition the foreign governments for the official recognition of the independence and government of the Philippines . . . .[38]

Agoncillo was appointed president of this commission and the members were authorized to "appear before any legally recognized government and represent the interests of the Filipinos before the same . . . ."[39]

On August 13, 1898, Manila surrendered to the American forces. The Filipino insurgents were refused entry into the city and relations quickly became

strained. It seemed increasingly clear to some of the Filipino leaders that the Americans had intentions different from those anticipated. Implied promises were not materializing. If they had not realized it earlier, the Filipinos now realized that they must look to their own interests and conduct their own negotiations with authorized American and other foreign representatives. The hasty organization of a diplomatic corps was the result.

On August 26, Agoncillo wrote to Aguinaldo for his credentials to the United States and suggested that one or two more representatives be sent with him in order to form a diplomatic mission.[40] Agoncillo wanted to keep up appearances of friendship for the Americans but continue preparations for war.

Four days later, Aguinaldo sent Agoncillo his final instructions, informing him that Major General Wesley Merritt, Commander of the Third Expeditionary Force, was leaving Manila to take part in the Paris Peace Conference. Agoncillo was to

> proceed as quickly as possible to America, in order to know what takes place. If perchance we should go back to Spanish control, ask them to help us as the French helped them during their own revolution and ask also the terms.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I am not yet informed if it is true that our representatives are to be admitted to the

> Commission; if they should be admitted, go immediately to the place where they will meet, which it is said here will be Paris, September 15th, and if among our countrymen there or in London there be one who will agree with the policy of the government, according to your instructions, propose him at once, so that credential [*sic*] may be sent him.
>
> I am hastening the constitution of Congress so that it may at once consider some resolutions. In whatever agreement you may make you will insert as a condition the ratification of this government.
>
> As early as possible I will transmit to you the names of those composing the committee in Hong Kong according to the enclosed decree. You can leave all the affairs I have confided to you in the hands of Galicano [Apacible] and Señor Crisanto Lichauco until the Board of Directors (*Junta Directiva*) shall be established.[41]

At the same time, Aguinaldo instructed the various diplomatic representatives abroad to entangle the United States in the affairs of the Philippines so that foreign powers might be prevented from dividing up the country.[42] The Filipinos were afraid that, like China, the Philippines would be partitioned by Western powers. If there were to be absorption by a foreign power, America was preferable.

With Agoncillo about to leave for the United States, Galicano Apacible, one of the leaders of the *Junta*, prepared to assume Agoncillo's duties in Hong Kong. The fragile harmony of the *Junta* was disrupted by these changes. Apacible was sympathetic to Agoncillo, not Sandico. Not achieving his desires in

Hong Kong and unable to achieve dominance over the *Junta*, Sandico returned to Manila, where he worked for Aguinaldo and the Americans. Basa, Cortés, and other annexationists, realizing that their position differed from that of the revolutionary cadre, defected to form a separate, loosely organized group lobbying for annexation. Others also resigned from the *Junta*, and, as a result, the *Junta* reorganized itself in November, 1898, and appointed new officers. Galicano Apacible became president, and Howard Bray was retained as press representative.[43]

The steamer *China* arrived in Hong Kong on September 1, 1898, with General Merritt and other officers on their way to Paris to appear before the Peace Commission. The *Junta* received permission from Merritt, the ranking officer, for Agoncillo to travel aboard the vessel to the United States. Merritt went to Paris by way of Suez, and General Francis V. Green, of the United States Volunteers, who was returning to the United States, as a courtesy, offered to assist Agoncillo during the voyage. On September 2, the S.S. *China* departed Hong Kong with Agoncillo and Sixto Lopez, his secretary.[44]

During the voyage Agoncillo tried to convince Green of the Filipinos' ability to sustain an independent government. Apparently he was successful, for Green went out of his way to assist them.[45]

Agoncillo, accompanied by Green, arrived in Washington on September 27. Prior to departing Hong Kong, Agoncillo had tried to arrange a meeting with McKinley; he sent a telegram congratulating the president on the close of war and occupation of Manila, and requesting representation on the Peace Commission to decide the future of the Philippine Islands.[46] McKinley did not reply. In the American capital, Agoncillo, through Green, requested an official conference, but the president regretfully refused, although he expressed a willingness to see Agoncillo unofficially.[47] The United States was in the process of negotiating a peace treaty with Spain; the revolutionary government, declared by Aguinaldo, had never been recognized and officially did not exist. Therefore, official recognition of Agoncillo would have constituted recognition of the Philippine government.

When the State Department also refused to accept his credentials, Agoncillo realized the futility of his position and arranged to see the president

unofficially. He was received privately by McKinley on October 1, and given the opportunity to present his case. Recounting the Filipinos' struggle to be free, Agoncillo informed the president that the Filipinos desired representation on the Paris Peace Commission. Sensing that this request would not be permitted, Agoncillo requested permission to present the Filipino case to the United States commissioners. McKinley in turn suggested that the presentation be personal, without Agoncillo's official designation. Since insistence on an official note would result in complete rejection, Agoncillo acceded. On October 3, he submitted his note to Assistant Secretary of State Alvey A. Adee, who in turn showed it to the president. The document was accepted with certain amendments suggested by McKinley. In essence, the note claimed the existence of a "lawful *de facto* government" and requested official recognition of this fact.[48]

A decision was made to forward the note to the American commissioners in Paris, and Agoncillo was advised to go to France to confer in person with them. It is apparent, in retrospect, that Agoncillo's presence was an embarrassment to McKinley's administration, which had no intention of recognizing the

Filipino government.[49] Agoncillo telegraphed Aguinaldo that he had been well received, but the Paris Commission would decide to whom the Philippines belonged. Although many people thought that the Philippines would be given independence, Agoncillo himself was not optimistic and advised Aguinaldo to prepare for war.[50]

Before leaving for Paris, Agoncillo tried to generate greater influence by sympathizers of the Filipino cause. He appealed to the American Episcopal Bishops, who were holding a conference in Washington, to back the Philippine independence movement. Presumably they would have sympathy for the victims of a situation brought about by Catholicism; but the bishops failed to respond.[51] In general, Protestant missionary groups were interested in the Philippines as a new field for their endeavors, which would be facilitated by annexation. Although the Philippine population was almost entirely Catholic, many believed that the people needed to be Christianized.

In Paris, Agoncillo continued his desperate attempts to gain support. He contacted Senator Cushman Davis of Minnesota, one of the American commissioners, but Davis refused to commit himself and claimed that the Filipino question had not yet been discussed.

Agoncillo repeatedly requested a hearing by the peace commissioners, but they refused. The hopelessness of his cause was fast becoming evident and Agoncillo wrote Apacible to hurry the purchase of arms and prepare for probable conflict with America, but not to provoke war.[52]

On December 10, 1898, the final draft of the Paris Treaty was signed, providing for the cession of the entire archipelago to the United States. Spain would be paid $20,000,000.

As a last resort, on December 12, Agoncillo released to the press and foreign legations in Paris a formal protest against

> any resolutions agreed upon at the peace conference in Paris as long as the judicial, political, and independent personality of the Filipino people is entirely unrecognized.[53]

Although the results of the peace conference were disappointing and the Filipino cause seemed hopeless, there was still a chance that the United States Senate would not ratify the treaty. Substantial opposition to annexation still existed. President McKinley seems to have been undecided until he made a tour of the western states and concluded that the people supported acquisition of the Philippines. This

was not the only influence upon his decision to ask for cession of the entire archipelago. McKinley had received numerous letters from Filipinos in Hong Kong begging for American citizenship; in addition there were strong commercial, military, and missionary lobbies for annexation. The president claimed, in a discussion with the General Missionary Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that he had gone down on his knees to God and prayed for guidance in this crucial decision.[54] However McKinley had made up his mind, the Senate remained divided between imperialists and anti-imperialists, between expansionists and anti-expansionists.

In the Philippines and Hong Kong, the rebel leaders realized the hopelessness of the situation, and were preparing for armed conflict. Still, they continued to explore every way to attain recognition. They proposed an agreement of peace and friendship with Spain as soon as the latter would recognize an independent Philippine government. The related proposals were not as favorable to Spain as the Paris Peace Treaty, nor did they preclude the possibility of re-opening hostilities against the United States. Spain did not take the proposal seriously.[55] Aguinaldo

wrote McKinley a letter proposing the Philippines be made a protectorate under the United States, but this too was ignored.[56]

In Washington, Agoncillo tried to arrange an interview with McKinley. His supplications went unanswered.[57] On January 11, 1899, Agoncillo wrote to Secretary of State John Hay, imploring him to consider mutual communications. Honoring the official policy of nonrecognition, Hay disregarded Agoncillo's letters.[58] Agoncillo's memorial to the Senate, dated January 30, 1899, was his last attempt at convincing the government of the United States to recognize the Philippines. He argued that Spain had had no right to cede the Philippines to the United States.[59] Agoncillo submitted this memorial to Secretary Hay for presentation to Congress, but there was no acknowledgment by Hay.

On February 5, 1899, one day before the scheduled Senate vote on the treaty, hostilities broke out between Filipino and American troops. Unknown to the Filipino insurgents, the Senate was deadlocked on ratification. The fighting seems to have tipped the scales, for it broke the psychological restraints on those senators who could not make up their minds. The

Senate ratified the treaty next day, by a vote of fifty-seven to twenty-seven--one vote more than the necessary two-thirds.[60]

Agoncillo's hopes for Philippine independence evaporated with the Senate's ratification of the peace treaty. Attacked by the press as a possible enemy agent, Agoncillo complained to Secretary Hay, but received no response. Friends warned the Filipino diplomat of the possibility of arrest; not wishing to suffer this embarrassment, Agoncillo left quietly for Canada.[61] Here he was out of touch with events, followed by American Secret Service men, and afraid to communicate by telegraph since facilities in the Philippines were now controlled by the United States. Although the Canadians offered him sanctuary, Agoncillo boarded a steamer for Europe. He had failed, and his mission to the United States was ended.[62]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Wildman to the Department of State, 6 May 1898, in *Consular Despatches*, Book 19, Hong Kong, 1 June 1895 to 30 April 1899.

[2]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:101.

[3]*PIR*, 399.31, Basa to President McKinley, 8 August 1898.

[4]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:240, extract from *PIR*, 471.8. This document impinges on the integrity of the consul. See also Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 1:448, extract from *Reseña Verídica*.

[5]Ibid., 1:101.

[6]Ibid., 3:240-41, extract from *PIR*, 1060.5.

[7]U.S., Congress, Senate, *Consular Reports*, pt. 1; and Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:37.

[8]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:239, extract from *PIR*, 471.8, 1060.5.

[9]Ibid., 3:240.

[10]Ibid., 3:239.

[11]Ibid., 3:240-42, extract from *PIR*, 471.8, 1060.5.

[12]Ibid., 3:240-42, extract from *PIR*, 471.8.

[13]Agoncillo's group consisted of José Alejandrino, Faustino Lichauco, Galicano Apacible, and Justo Lukban.

[14]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:243, extract from *PIR*, 493.9.

[15]Ibid., 2:488, extract from *PIR*, 567.11.

[16]Ibid., 3:245, extract from *PIR*, 1060.5.

[17]Ibid., 3:250, extract from *PIR*, 4.7.

[18]Ibid., 3:244, extract from *PIR*, 1060.5.

[19]S. V. Epistola, "The Hong Kong *Junta*," *Social Studies Humanities Review*, 13 April 1970, pp. 30-31.

[20]*PIR*, 477.1, Agoncillo to Aguinaldo, Hong Kong, 26 August 1898.

[21]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 320; *PIR*, 399.1; cf. Epistola, "Hong Kong *Junta*," pp. 31-32; and Eufronio M. Alip, *Philippine-Japanese Relations* (Manila: Alip and Sons, Inc., 1959), p. 48.

[22]Alip, *Philippine-Japanese Relations*, pp. 45-46; and cf. Epistola, "Hong Kong *Junta*," pp. 33-38.

[23]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:30, extract from *PIR*, 206.6.

[24]Ibid., 2:53.

[25]Ibid., 3:82, extract from *PIR*, 674.1.

[26]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, pp. 222-23.

[27]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:54.

[28]Mabini, *Philippine Revolution*, p. 52. Mabini was first introduced to Aguinaldo on 12 June 1898.

[29]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:135-41, extract from *PIR*, 206.3.

[30]*PIR*, 477.6. Agoncillo also wrote Mabini on 22 July 1898, recommending representatives in certain foreign countries. An astute politician close to the leader, Mabini may also have influenced Aguinaldo to appoint foreign representatives. *PIR*, 451.1.

[31]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:189, extract from *PIR*, 399.1.

[32]Ibid., 3:189; a copy of the manifesto is found in 3:187.

[33]Ibid., 3:193, extract from *PIR*, Books C.1. Aguinaldo recommended to Agoncillo that he leave the *Junta* in the charge of Apacible, Sandico, Lukban, and Gonzaga.

[34]Ibid., 3:196, extract from *PIR*, 5.7. Apparently Aguinaldo believed the Carolines and Marianas, also Spanish territory, a part of the Philippines.

[35]Ibid., 3:197, extract from *PIR*, 432.2. France, Pedro P. Roxas and Juan Luna; England, Antonio Regidor and Sixto Lopez; United States, Filipe Agoncillo; Japan, Mariano Ponce and Faustino Lichauco; and Australia, Heriverto Zarcal.

[36]Ibid., 3:198.

[37]Ibid., 3:322, extract from *PIR*, 385.5.

[38]Ibid., 3:411, extract from *PIR*, Books C.1.

[39]Ibid., 3:412.

[40]*PIR*, 477.1.

[41]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:327-28, extract from *PIR*, Books C.1.

[42]*PIR*, 457.5.

[43]Ibid., 1203.1; and *Consular Despatches*, Book 20, No. 133, Hong Kong, 1 June 1895 to 30 April 1899.

[44]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:500; *PIR*, 431.8.

[45]*PIR*, 477.7. Agoncillo to Aguinaldo, 22 September 1899.

[46]Ibid., 102.5.

[47]Ibid., 451.4.

[48]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 3:500-501; *PIR*, 451.6, Agoncillo to Aguinaldo, Paris, 22 October 1898; and cf. Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 323.

[49]Aguinaldo and Pacis, *A Second Look*, pp. 85-86.

[50]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:500-501, extract from *PIR*, 451.4.

[51]Ibid.

[52]*PIR*, 451.6.

[53]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:501, extract from *PIR*, 395.8, 491.6.

[54]Charles Olcott, *The Life of William McKinley*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1917), vol. 2, p. 109 et seq.

[55]*PIR*, 426.3, 426.10.

[56]Ibid., 441.2.

[57]Ibid., 1116.3.

[58]U.S., Congress, Senate, Civil Government for the Philippine Islands, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 3 June 1902, *Congressional Record*, vol. 35, pt. 6, p. 6217.

[59]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, pp. 362-68.

[60]Garel A. Grunder and William E. Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), p. 45. There has been a great deal of study of ratification of this treaty. See also: Paolo E. Coletta, "Bryan, McKinley, and the Treaty of Paris," *Pacific Historical Review* 26 (1961): 341-50; Foster Rhea Dulles, *The Imperial Years* (New York: Apollo, 1956); Richard Hofstadter, "Manifest Destiny and the Philippines," *America in Crisis*, ed. Daniel Aaron (Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1952); Christopher Lasch, "The Anti-Imperialists, the Philippines, and the Inequality of Man," *Journal of Social History* 24 (1958): 319-331; Ernest R. May, "American Imperialism: A Reinterpretation," *Perspectives in American History* 1 (1967): 123-287; and Thomas McCormick, "Insular Imperialism and the Open Door: The China Market and the Spanish-American War," *Pacific Historical Review* 32 (1963): 155-170.

[61]U.S., Congress, Senate, Testimony of Sixto Lopez, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 3 June 1902, *Congressional Record*, vol. 35, pt. 6.

[62]"Agoncillo in Montreal," *Manila Times*, 25 March 1899.

CHAPTER V

SUCCESS, FAILURE, AND CONSEQUENCES

The failure of Filipino diplomacy to influence the Paris peace negotiations, the American decision to acquire the Philippines, and the increasing bitterness between Filipino insurgents and American volunteers shattered the Filipinos' confidence regarding the intentions of the United States. The smoldering distrust of Americans flared into open hostility during the last quarter of 1898 and exploded into war by February, 1899.

Aware of Filipino feelings, President McKinley informed Major-General E. S. Otis, Commander of American forces in the Philippines, that the paramount aim of the military administration should be to win the respect, confidence, and affection of the inhabitants: "the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation . . . ."[1] But the bitter and distrustful Filipinos were not interested in "benevolent assimilation"; they wanted to consolidate their revolutionary gains. Psychologically they were prepared for war; conciliatory measures short of independence would not satisfy them. The insurgents had recently tasted

victory over the Spaniards, and they were now willing to test their strength against the Americans. Seemingly casual in military bearing, the Americans were regarded as poorer soldiers than the Spaniards. In practice, however, the struggle was not waged solely in the Philippines, nor only with bolos and rifles.

While Agoncillo was in Washington, the *Junta* began an ambitious propaganda campaign. On November 6, 1898, Apacible, the new head of the *Junta*, recommended bribing correspondents of foreign news services.[2] Propaganda committees were formed in Europe and wherever Filipinos gathered. In Paris, Agoncillo tried to use the local propaganda committee to attract and influence the Peace Commission, publishing an "Act of Adhesion" directed to the Philippine government.[3] In Spain, Filipino residents formed the Filipino Republican Committee of Madrid, which produced a propaganda paper, *Filipinas ante Europa*.[4]

By the spring of 1899, the propaganda campaign was well underway. The *Manila Times*, a hostile American newspaper, asked: "Will None Of My Gallant Knights Rid Me Of This Troublous Priest?" The paper was not speaking of the minions of the Catholic church. As it explained:

> Day after day we came across more cases of the remarkably false news that is being disseminated by Filipino agents all over the world, the *Junta* in Hong Kong being most notorious in this respect. It is scarcely conceivable that respectable news agencies would allow themselves to be influenced, or be indiscreet enough to be "taken in," by these political schemers. Nevertheless, telegrams are appearing in papers all over the world purporting to have been supplied by Reuters and the Associated Press which are nothing but a barefaced conglomeration of lies . . . .[5]

It would seem that the world's press did not verify its sources, or Apacible's scheme to bribe correspondents was succeeding.

In some ways, the propaganda effort had adverse effects upon the Filipinos. Anxious to send encouragement and to impress foreign sympathizers with public support for the Filipino cause, agents reported meetings with anti-imperialists and sympathetic men of prominence. Every favorable word, whether hesitantly or reservedly given, was amplified until it became a commitment or a promise. Often a pessimistic evaluation was ignored or converted to favor the Filipinos.[6]

In the Philippines circulars containing overstatements, sincere or not, were delivered to insurgent chiefs in isolated areas. The propaganda, taken out of context and misinterpreted, produced a false sense of support, but one that was too transient to support a protracted struggle.

An example of unrealistic reporting was the *Junta's* evaluation of the Democratic party in the United States. In early 1900, agents of the *Junta* claimed to have had an interview with William Jennings Bryan, the presidential candidate of the Democrats. They took this opportunity to invite Bryan to participate in a conference between Filipino agents and anti-imperialists, but Bryan refused lest he be called a traitor. In his stead he "sent a most trusted person, his right hand man, Dr. Gardner." The conference was summarized in a letter to Aguinaldo from I. de los Santos, a Filipino agent: first, Bryan would never cease to defend Filipino rights; second, Bryan's name could never be mentioned in any manifesto; and third, in behalf of Bryan, Gardner promised that, if elected president, Bryan would recognize Philippine independence. De los Santos proposed that Filipino agents take up residence in Washington "pending the outcome of the presidential contest, aiding propaganda, and enlivening it until November . . . ." Two thousand pounds sterling ($20,000) was also necessary "for the propaganda, for paying newspapers and for bribing senators--this last clause is very important but difficult."[7]

To the Filipinos, the agents' reports represented a solid assurance of support for the rebels. An objective evaluation would not have substantiated the second-hand promises of a politician who refused to let his name be used by his supposed allies.

The agents assured the *Junta* that the Democratic party would come into power in the next election. McKinley, the enemy of the Filipinos, would be deposed and a president favorable to Philippine independence would take office. This message was spread through circulars calling themselves "extracts from our correspondence with America," "news from our foreign agents," or "news from America." A new and powerful party had supposedly arisen in America to demand Philippine independence.[8]

The claims were embellished by the guerrilla chiefs, who told their men that anti-imperialists were hanging imperialists in the streets of America, and that the fight should continue against American sympathizers among the native populace.[9] Even sophisticates such as F. Buencamino celebrated Bryan's support with banquets and toasts.[10] However, when Bryan was defeated soundly and McKinley was reelected,

irreparable damage was done to the morale of the insurgents.

Not all propaganda generated by the *Junta* came from Filipino sources. W. H. Bray, an opportunistic Englishman, was particularly active. Aside from maintaining a steady correspondence with Aguinaldo and providing advice, Bray appeared in Hong Kong around September, 1898, and became the press representative of the *Junta*.

When open warfare broke out, the character of Bray's press releases changed into aggressive propaganda, denouncing American military tactics and accusing the American forces of committing atrocities. These broadsides, which even exceeded the claims of Aguinaldo's native correspondents, were of value to the insurgent cause in providing fuel for the anti-imperialists.[11] Despite Bray's usefulness, which was partially based on the fact that his nationality lent credibility to his charges and claims, the *Junta* was wary of him. In a confidential letter to Aguinaldo in August, 1899, a member of the *Junta* stated, "Whatever we do he will never bring a law suit against us as we have documents in our hands which will injure him in pocket and reputation . . . ."[12]

In Hong Kong, Consul Wildman lost the trust of the *Junta* and his advice no longer affected its policies. The State Department censure and the course of events had finally convinced Bryan that his labor would be fruitless. By the time fighting broke out, Wildman was working against the *Junta's* efforts to procure arms.[13]

The insurgents' financial resources were being rapidly depleted with relatively little to show for their purchases. Repeatedly, agents of the *Junta* were forced to pay bribes--"squeeze"--to consummate their deals. By mid-December, 1898, the ₱400,000 acquired by Aguinaldo from the Spaniards had been released by the Hong Kong banks; what was left was guarded carefully.

One of the *Junta's* most costly lessons resulted from an arms contract arranged through Spitzel Company, an American firm headquartered in Shanghai. G. Lichauco, an agent of the *Junta*, signed a purchase agreement written in English, which he could not read. The contract obligated the *Junta* to pay ₱170,000 for arms of which delivery in the Philippines was very uncertain. When the *Junta* delayed prepayment, the Spitzel Company threatened a lawsuit. Thereupon the *Junta* paid ₱150,000 and agreed to make no claim for

the rifles. A full report was made to Aguinaldo in which the *Junta* staff explained that they were honor-bound to pay; a lawsuit would have exposed their operations and probably caused their expulsion from Hong Kong by British authorities.[14] These were weak excuses tendered by men who had little business experience or knowledge of law. Dealings in arms were as illegal for commercial firms in China as for Filipino exiles in Hong Kong. A contractor had little chance to win a lawsuit centering on an unlawful service never performed. Obviously the *Junta's* leaders did not consult the successful Filipino businessmen in Hong Kong, who undoubtedly would have recognized that the charges of the Spitzel Company were a paper threat.[15]

Correspondence between the *Junta* and Aguinaldo, even after the outbreak of hostilities, was replete with schemes to acquire arms. The *Junta* continually pleaded for funds, which the Filipino government was unable to provide. Apart from their own desperate financial needs, the insurgent leaders may have considered the *Junta* a poor risk for expending their meager assets. Instructions were occasionally issued concerning the covert landing of arms, but it is unknown whether these arms were procured through the

Junta after hostilities began. It is a fact, however, that arms were obtained by the insurgents. Spanish officers--prisoners of the insurgents in a position to know--estimated that Aguinaldo had obtained 56,000 rifles from Spain by various means.[16]

The other agents of the *Junta* appointed by Aguinaldo in August, 1898 did not fare any better than Agoncillo. In France, Roxas seems to have accomplished nothing. Ponce and Lichauco continued to intrigue in Japan but won no tangible support. Regidor, the representative in London, kept up correspondence with the Hong Kong *Junta*, giving advice and submitting various plans for fighting the Americans, but he contributed nothing tangible. Sixto Lopez joined Regidor when Agoncillo left Canada for Europe.

There is evidence that Lopez had his own ideas concerning the diplomatic representation of the Philippines, and that he was a source of discord among his fellow agents. On June 8, 1899, Agoncillo wrote that he did not see why Regidor insisted on having Lopez sent to Washington as Aguinaldo's representative. He himself would not have Lopez for a secretary.[17] On June 22, Lopez suggested himself as a representative to Washington with full powers of negotiation, including

the right to sell property and borrow money in the name of the Filipino government. It was his belief that the time was right to re-negotiate for peace and independence, and that he could easily accomplish the task. He also desired authority to sell Filipino concessions to wealthy Englishmen, the money to be used to support the Filipino cause. Probably respecting the advice of his other agents abroad, Aguinaldo never granted such powers to Lopez.[18]

While in America, Lopez wrote a circular addressed to the American people and distributed from Boston. It consisted of reprints of letters pleading for recognition of and support for the Filipino people. Many of his statements contained promises he had no authority to give--an assumption of power that prompts one to question his understanding of his position within the revolutionary hierarchy and his overall grasp of the situation. The end of 1900 found Lopez in Hong Kong, where he tried to secure passage to the Philippines. Apparently having lost credibility with his fellow agents, he was returning to the Philippines to re-establish his position. When he refused to take the required oath of allegiance to the United States,

permission to enter the Philippines was denied by the American authorities.[19]

During 1899 and 1900, the *Junta* received many letters from Americans favoring Filipino independence. The missives asked for information, tendered advice, and proffered congratulations. In March, 1899, the *Junta* received a letter from the secretary of the Single Tax League of Ohio, containing a resolution drawn up by the Cincinnati branch, which denounced the "unjust war waged by the Government of the United States upon the Filipino patriots . . . ." The members of the club, Democrats and Republicans alike, were convinced that the war in the Philippines was

> being carried on without any pretense of consulting the will of the American people upon the matter, and at the dictates of the plutocracy which rules the government . . . .

The letter closed by "wishing to General Aguinaldo and his patriot army the greatest success against our army of subjugation, tyranny, and oppression."[20] Such letters encouraged the Filipino leaders and probably prolonged the war, just as the activities of some Americans in the early 1970s may have lengthened the Vietnam conflict. The Filipinos did not seem to recognize that groups such as the Single Tax League of

Ohio were small, powerless, and viewed as hopelessly impractical by most Americans at the time.

As their rebellion progressed, the Filipinos learned of other information which, although discouraging, served to strengthen their resolve. Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt, an expert on the Philippines, wrote in June, 1899 that, in his opinion, only two conditions would be acceptable to the Filipinos--independence or an American protectorate. What had happened in Texas and California would be inevitable if America took possession--the natives would become workmen and employees on the estates they had owned. Blumentritt predicted:

> That proud scorn which characterizes the Yankee in his political and social contact with colored people . . . will close their ears to the complaints and aspirations of the sons of the country and will laugh at those who helped to bring the country under the American yoke.[21]

There was every reason for the Filipinos to believe this grim prediction.

Hong Kong was the dissemination point for Aguinaldo's dispatches, which were smuggled out of the Philippines. Communication between Aguinaldo and the *Junta* became increasingly difficult, however. It is evident that this physical and administrative isolation

fostered a divergence of ideas and policy within the *Junta*. Continuous internal rivalries and personal intrigues wasted much energy.

The superior military forces of the United States had destroyed organized Filipino resistance by November, 1899, and Aguinaldo began a forced odyssey that would only end with his capture. By the spring of 1900, the American forces were still keeping Aguinaldo on the move. The *Junta* complained that from November, 1899 until May, 1900, only one letter was received from the insurgent leader. During this period Aguinaldo's communications with his subordinate commanders also broke down. Isolated by terrain and fighting a war that was becoming increasingly unconventional, the chiefs tended increasingly to establish themselves as supreme within their territories.

To survive and to continue the struggle, the Filipinos had to adopt guerrilla warfare. Aguinaldo advocated this form of warfare despite the opposition of some of his top commanders. Unavoidably, warfare fractionalized the revolutionary government. A real danger was the easy progression from guerrilla warfare to banditry, a danger which the more astute Filipino leaders comprehended. On May 1, 1900, the *Junta* wrote

to Aguinaldo, warning him that the United States might declare an end to the war in the Philippines, and put into effect the "law of bandits"; that is, might cease to recognize prisoners of war, only the existence of robbers and brigands. Although this might well mean the destruction of the insurrection, the situation was now beyond Aguinaldo's control.[22]

The *Junta* could only send encouragement to the scattered Filipino forces, and plead with them to continue the struggle. This was done in the name of a disintegrating government. To its correspondents abroad, the *Junta* spoke for a government that, to all intents, had ceased to exist. Since the deterioration was less evident to those further removed, Filipinos abroad continued to promote revolution at home; throughout 1900, they urged their countrymen to resist. Their letters were filled with assertions of growing support for the Filipino cause and personal assurances that they would soon be in the Philippines to fight and die beside their brothers. Few, if any, ever did return. Many requested money to promote the Filipino cause in foreign countries.

One can only conclude that most of the exiles had no desire to exchange the safety and luxury of Europe for the fighting and the sacrificing which they

so glibly urged upon their countrymen. Their words, however, temporarily sustained and buoyed the morale of many Filipinos.

The propaganda campaign reached new intensity by the end of summer, 1900. The acting head of the *Junta*, Riego de Dios, who had replaced Apacible while the latter made a trip to America in April, requested more information, especially concerning atrocities committed by American soldiers. The insurgents in the Philippines tried to supply the information, but by this time it was difficult to get information out of the country and, when they did, their accuracy was questionable and their documentation inadequate.[23]

On November 10, 1900, the *Junta* was obliged to announce the demoralizing news of McKinley's re-election. Pleas to continue fighting, because the United States would tire of the conflict, were now unenthusiastically received by the weary insurgents. Their hopes had been based on Bryan. The war was going badly, and there was little prospect of a change. The *Junta* and its correspondents continued to send pathetic summaries of House and Senatorial allusions to support of the Filipinos. Translated into Spanish, these materials were distributed in the Philippines. The

Junta had lost touch with the revolutionary movement, for the rebels at home were living from day to day, constantly on the move and continually harassed by pursuing enemy forces. Even if they could have understood the intricacies of American politics, they were hardly in a position to care about the debates of politicians half a world away.

The Filipino populace had their own reasons for ignoring the pleas of the *Junta*. Reforms and increasing stability had followed the American occupation. Although imperfect, the situation in the Philippines was promising. On June 21, 1900, General Arthur MacArthur, who had taken command from General Otis as military governor of the Philippines, issued a decree of amnesty to all insurgents surrendering and taking an oath of allegiance.[24] This was one of the first steps to end the war. On July 2, MacArthur issued a proclamation granting individual rights to Filipinos. Peaceable assemblies and festivals began to be held in and around Manila, the former bastion of insurgent resistance. Earlier, the Schurman Commission, the first of two teams sent out by Congress to investigate the situation, recommended that military government be replaced by civilian rule. The second team, under

Taft, began to formulate a specific colonial policy for the islands. The desire to conciliate the Filipinos was an overriding--although unwritten--goal of this commission.[25]

America's attitude was not lost upon the Filipinos. The guerrillas started to lose urban support, and an increasing number of disillusioned and exhausted rebels began surrendering. Many of the wealthy and timorous intellectuals, who had never accepted the fact that their leader was not of their class, and who feared the emergence of "have nots," found it easy to abandon what now appeared to be a hopeless struggle. They defected to the Americans.[26]

On March 23, 1901, Aguinaldo was captured in the hills of Palanan, and on April 1, he took the oath of allegiance to the United States. The *Junta* addressed a circular on April 8, to all Filipino commanders in the field informing them of Aguinaldo's capture and of the surrender of other leaders. Even after the disintegration of his government and the scattering of his forces, Aguinaldo had remained the symbol of independence and resistance. His capture was the final demoralizing blow to most of the guerrillas in the field.

Perhaps significantly, Aguinaldo's capture was initiated when a small group of insurgents surrendered to Lieutenant D. Taylor of the 24th U. S. Infantry. In their possession were several letters from Aguinaldo addressed to Filipino leaders. One of the captured Filipinos, Cecilio Segismundo, revealed Aguinaldo's hideout. Brigadier General Fredrick Funston, Commander of the 24th Infantry, formulated a bold plan, utilizing Lázaro Segovia, a Spaniard who had also been an insurgent. That former rebels helped to capture Aguinaldo is indicative of the deterioration of morale, and of the willing acceptance of their fate at the hands of the Americans.[27]

The Hong Kong *Junta* did not expire at once, but survived in a moribund state until July 31, 1903, when it was officially dissolved. Some members began to filter back to the Philippines, while others, conspicuous in their pride, chose to remain in exile. One individual, Artemio Ricarte, attempted to rekindle the revolutionary flame.

Ricarte was a general in the insurgent army. Arrested in July, 1900, he was deported with Mabini to Guam in January, 1901. Ricarte was repatriated in February, 1903, aboard the U. S. Army transport *Thomas*.

When he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, he was not allowed to land in the Philippines, and the *Thomas* continued on to Hong Kong. There he associated with the members of the revolutionary committee.[28] Although no organized *Junta* then existed, these men eventually formed the *Katipunan Abuluyan*, a society based upon the old *Katipunan*. Ricarte was elected president.

In May, 1903, a stranger named Manuel Ruiz "Prin" arrived in Hong Kong from Manila, claiming authority granted by the Filipino people to treat with foreign powers on independence. Bearing documents and lists of individuals professing loyalty to the cause, he proselytized among the Filipinos of the crown colony. Ricarte, one of his initial recruits, introduced him to others and vouched for his sincerity.

Ricarte and Ruiz discovered that they lived for a common goal--"to return to the Philippines to revolutionize the country or die in the woods if the country did not respond . . . ."[29] In December, 1903, they formed a committee or *Junta* called the Universal Republic of Philippine Democracy.

Hidden in the hold of the S. S. *Yuensang*, a Chinese freighter, Ricarte returned to the Philippines

in December, 1903, successfully avoided the authorities, and made contact with former insurgents, whom he tried to recruit. Again and again he was counseled to return to Hong Kong or to submit to the American authorities. He was told that "the independence of the country would be accomplished in three or four years since Taft had set up the doctrine of 'the Philippines for the Filipinos . . . .'"[30] His former comrades in arms tried to convince him of the futility of restarting the revolution, with unavoidable bloodshed, especially when independence was only a few years away. Traveling from friend to friend, he received essentially the same answer to his pleas, but he continued to try.

During this time, the Secret Service bureaus of the Constabulary and City of Manila were hunting Ricarte. The authorities had known Ruiz's and Ricarte's intentions even in Hong Kong, where they had been watched carefully. Members of the former *Junta* had been warned by Apacible, who received word from Manila, that Ruiz was well known in that city as an irresponsible individual of anarchistic tendencies. Filipinos kept the American consulate apprised of what these men were doing.

Ricarte's efforts to raise an army proved futile, except in the province of Ilocos Sur, where he attracted a few constabulary soldiers. On April 29, 1904, he was arrested at a cockpit, tried, and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. He was banished from the islands in 1910 after again refusing the oath of allegiance. He returned to Hong Kong.[31] This vain effort to revive the revolution played out the sequel to the story of the *Junta*.

FOOTNOTES

[1]McKinley to Otis, 21 December 1898, in U.S. Adjutant-General's Office, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain from April 15, 1898 to July 30, 1902*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 2:719.

[2]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:492, extract from *PIR*, 431.5.

[3]Ibid., 4:328, extract from John R. Thomas, Jr., *Collection Relating to the Insurrectionist Government of the Philippines, 1898-1899*, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., folder 6; and Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 319.

[4]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 4:328, folders 5 and 6.

[5]*Manila Times*, 8 April 1899.

[6]Worcester, *Philippines Past and Present*, pp. 248-52.

[7]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:506, extract from *PIR*, 516.6. *PIR*, 567.1 claims that twenty-one senators had been bought. See also Worcester, *Philippines Past and Present*, chap. 10 et seq.; and Cameron Forbes, *Philippine Islands*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1945), 1:61. Since no mention of a Dr. Gardner appears in the biographies of Bryan, there is some doubt as to his position on Bryan's staff, and to de los Santos' reference to him.

[8]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:512-13.

[9]Ibid.

[10]*PIR*, 970.7, 1134.1, 17.9.

[11]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:498, extract from *PIR*, 445.2.

[12]Ibid., 2:499; and *PIR*, 396.8.

[13]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:493. The activities of Lt. Col. John S. Mallory, U.S.A., the military attache at Peking, may have also contributed to Wildman's reversal of behavior. See *PIR*, 399.1.

[14]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:495, extract from *PIR*, 54.5.

[15]Ibid., 2:495. According to the *Manila Times* (25 August 1899): "There is money in running a *Junta*, but when others claim the money then the *Junta* is on the run." Cf. Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 318. Many of the *Junta's* more sophisticated leaders had returned to the Philippines with Aguinaldo, or had been appointed agents to foreign countries.

[16]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:496, extract from *PIR*, 445.2.

[17]Ibid., 2:505, extract from *PIR*, 443.1.

[18]Ibid., 2:505.

[19]Ibid., 2:506, extracts from the circular "Sixto Lopez to the American People" (1900).

[20]*PIR*, 391.3; and A. Mabini to Isidor de Santos, 2 July 1899, in Apolinario Mabini, *The Letters of Apolinario Mabini* (Manila: National Heroes Commission, 1965), p. 189.

[21]*PIR*, 446.0.

[22]Taylor, *Philippine Insurrection*, 2:516, extract from *PIR*, 516.6.

[23]Ibid., 2:517.

[24]U.S., Congress, Senate, *Hearings on Affairs in Philippine Islands*, pt. 2, p. 1923.

[25]Salamanca, *Filipino Reaction to American Rule*, p. 38.

[26]Agoncillo, *Malolos*, p. 563. See also Forbes, *Philippine Islands*, 1:90; and Onofre Corpuz, *The Philippines* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 65-71.

[27]Lazaro Segovia, *The Full Story of Aguinaldo's Capture* (Manila: MCS Enterprises, 1969).

[28]The committee was then composed of G. Apacible, C. Lukban, M. Ponce, V. Ilustre, and E. R. de Dios, former agents and correspondents for the *Junta* who had returned to Hong Kong at the end of the war.

[29]Ricarte, *Memoirs of General Ricarte*, pp. 115, 124, extracted from Appendix No. 164 in the Watson Collection, police record of Artemio Ricarte, and Appendix No. 173, Watson Collection, stenographic report of an interrogation put to Artemio Ricarte by the Philippine Constabulary and the City Secret Service of Manila.

[30]Ibid., p. 125.

[31]Ibid., p. 188.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

In 1859, Sir John Bowring, the governor of Hong Kong and a recognized expert on the Far East, predicted after a tour of the Philippines:

> There is no reason to apprehend that these millions will aspire to political power or sovereignty [or ever] . . . unite in a national objective or recognize one native chief.[1]

Less than fifty years later, Bowring's prophecy was disproved. The Filipino millions aspired to political power, the masses united with a common objective, and they recognized one leader. But the greatest irony in Bowring's forecast is that the Philippine Revolution presaged a movement that would one day sweep all of Southeast Asia. The dream harbored by a small group of exiles in Hong Kong proved to be a force infinitely greater than themselves.

This study has described that *Junta* with the purpose of assessing its effect upon Philippine independence. Of course, certain events outside of Hong Kong--such as Filipino activity in Europe, the United States, and the Philippines--bear upon this subject, and are therefore examined too.

In January, 1898, there was no defined goal toward which the *Junta* could work. The exiles were skeptical of the Spaniards' good faith; while psychologically prepared to renew the rebellion, for the moment they had to be content with waiting and watching. Aguinaldo, obsessed by his dream of independence, could not openly advocate this goal so soon after the conclusion of the pact of Biak-na-Bato, but he prepared for the opportunity.

The Spaniards were mistaken in their assessment of the situation; their post-pact attitude reflected pre-insurrection policies. They believed that, with the voluntary expatriation of the insurgent leaders, peace would be restored. Only the granting of reforms could have satisfied the Filipinos. Bad faith was exhibited by both sides. While Aguinaldo seems to have expected from the beginning to use the indemnity for the purchase of arms, the Spaniards never intended to grant reforms.

The obdurate attitude of the Spaniards towards reform, and their departure from the agreed-upon distribution of the indemnity, was all the provocation the sensitive and anxious exiles needed. They began to foment revolution with reform as their immediate

objective. For most of the members of the *Junta* and certainly for the Filipino masses, independence was a concept whose foundation was not firmly laid. More than three centuries of Spanish rule lay heavy upon the people. The idea of independence originated with the *Katipunan*. It was cherished by Aguinaldo who caused it to germinate within the *Junta* and encouraged the members to adopt it as their goal. Through the efforts of the exiles, this goal was replanted in the fertile environment of the Philippines.

In instituting revolt, the *Junta* was conspicuously successful; it organized the people and eventually, with the Americans, defeated the Spaniards. Turning against the Americans, the *Junta* continued to espouse revolution, until it lost its base of power--the support of the people.

How did the formation of the *Junta* facilitate its purpose? The treaty of Biak-na-Bato provided the Filipino leadership with an advantageous way out of an indefensible position. The insurgents were at the end of their resources, and would soon be compelled to surrender for lack of arms. This fact was unknown to the Spaniards, for whom the conflict had become expensive. The Spanish settled for what they considered a

cheap compromise but one which in the end proved dear to them. Aguinaldo and his companions left the Philippines as heroes, with their pride intact, their honor unquestioned, and their pockets filled with Spanish gold. The simultaneous deportation of the revolutionary intellect to a common place of exile did not eliminate the core of the insurrectionist movement but merely relocated its leadership in Hong Kong.

The banishment of the revolutionary chiefs provided a respite that enabled them to regroup. They remained intact and organized, their strengths combining to increase the revolutionary spirit of the whole. Aguinaldo, the strongest personality in the group, carried with him to Hong Kong the respect and authority he had earned on the battlefield. This esteem was strengthened by the spartan existence he demanded of himself and others.

Hong Kong provided several advantages. Of all the possible places of exile, it was the closest--approximately two and one half days by steamer from Manila. It was an international city and major commercial port, an ideal location from which to acquire and ship arms to the Philippines. As a cosmopolitan center, it brought the Filipinos into contact with

representatives of foreign powers. Governed by the British, the Crown Colony afforded freedom of operation that was not possible under the oppressive Spanish administration of the Philippines. Old Filipino sympathizers--expatriates from the 1870s--were prospering in the city. They provided contacts and financial help to the newly arrived exiles.

There were also disadvantages with which the exiles had to cope. Their visibility was relatively high, for they were foreigners who did not speak the local language, they were confined to a geographically small area, and they were unfamiliar with the colony's laws. These factors made it easy for Spanish agents to observe them, despite their clandestine and conspiratorial activity.

Perhaps the most debilitating feature of the exiles' existence was their lack of personal contact with the Filipino masses. A cleavage began upon their arrival and increased until the *Junta* had lost psychological touch with the people by 1901. The physical isolation of the *Junta* from the Philippines was accentuated first by the action of the British authorities and then of the American military.

The leadership of the *Junta* resided in Aguinaldo. He was the embodiment of the revolutionary spirit and, with a singleness of purpose, he directed the *Junta's* energy towards independence. Despite allegations of greedy and traitorous intentions, there can be no doubt that Aguinaldo succeeded in preserving the Spanish indemnity, securing American aid, and maintaining the revolutionary integrity of the *Junta*. Conversely, the *Junta* was his support, and individual members were his confidantes--men such as Filipe Agoncillo, Teodoro Sandico, J. M. Leyba, and Gregorio del Pilar. While they did not possess the charismatic qualities of Aguinaldo, they had keen minds and an understanding of the world which enabled them to cloak Aguinaldo's rustic background with their sophistication. Their support never wavered, for they recognized in Aguinaldo that quality of leadership and spark of greatness necessary to any revolutionary movement. His faltering or insecurity was observed only by his closest companions. They buoyed their leader's spirit, helped him formulate his strategy, and advised and guided him through the maze of diplomacy. They were the pillars; he, the foundation.

Aguinaldo's methods, adopted and enlarged upon by the *Junta*, were crafty, complex, and brilliant, involving a spectrum of talents--espionage, diplomacy, propaganda, murder, bribery, deceit, and forgery. Justified by the avowed goal of independence for the Philippines, he saw no tactic as amoral.

Aguinaldo kept tight rein on the *Junta* and utilized control over its funds, as well as personal magnetism, to bind the members to him. He overcame distractions to individuals generated by isolation and fed by greed, pride and lust for power.

While the actions of the Spaniards generated a purpose for the *Junta*, the goal of independence, kept alive within Aguinaldo, seemed to become realistic as a result of the impressions received through consuls Pratt and Wildman. No doubt Aguinaldo was initially convinced that America's interest in the Philippines was motivated by humanitarian considerations. His obsession with independence encouraged him to accept Pratt's vague promises, and he transferred his personal goal to the *Junta*, imbuing its members with a greater sense of direction.

The goal of independence was readily accepted by the inner circle--those closest to Aguinaldo--but it

gave rise to suspicion of the United States when American representatives began to equivocate. The *Junta* advised caution in dealing with the Americans and prepared for a change in United States policy, but the idea of independence as the ultimate goal remained rooted strongly.

Prior to Aguinaldo's return to Manila, the *Junta* members acted with concerted and unselfish zeal, and remarkable efficiency. They cultivated the support of the wealthy Filipinos in Hong Kong, overcoming social disparities and avoiding basic political differences. They managed their finances and maintained a low political profile to avoid antagonizing the British authorities. By repudiating and replacing the officials of the provisional government with members of the *Junta*, *de jure* rather then *de facto* status was achieved. Contact was established with foreign powers. The *Junta* accurately assessed the intentions of the Americans, utilizing the influence of the American consuls and the resources of the Unites States Navy, while avoiding disclosure of their true desires. Circulars were distributed, designed to prepare the homeland for Aguinaldo's return and the renewal of the insurrection. The *Junta* boldly played both sides,

simultaneously negotiating with the Spaniards and Americans. Errors were made, but the *Junta* took advantage of every opportunity to further the revolutionary cause, rose above internal problems, and maintained a united front. This was a most productive period for the *Junta*.

With Aguinaldo's departure on May 17, 1898, the *Junta* was divested of vitality. The men left behind in Hong Kong, although generally capable and dedicated, lacked greatness and were wracked by internal rivalries, personal greed, and occasional stupidity. Of all the exiles, Agoncillo was perhaps the most able, but his rivalry with Sandico detracted from the *Junta's* purpose and threatened its existence. A rift between the "inner" and "outer" circles sapped the strength of the organization. Several efforts to procure arms were mishandled, drained the finances, and raised questions of reliability. Incurring the ire of the local authorities, the *Junta* did attain a degree of success in its efforts to procure arms at a time when they were desperately needed by Aguinaldo, but ineptness was the rule.

With the assignment of its most capable men as agents to foreign countries, and Sandico's return to

the Philippines, the *Junta's* role became measurably less. Although in some instances their efforts were extraordinary, the agents of the *Junta* were essentially unsuccessful in their main attempts to gain recognition. Aguinaldo therefore conceived new missions for the *Junta*: propaganda and intelligence.

Serving as a clearing house for information, the *Junta* relayed messages to and from the Philippines, but not until the declaration of war did the organization again become productive. War determined the course of events; no longer was it necessary to hedge the propaganda in hopes of recognition.

Shrewdly using Bray's talents, the *Junta* achieved notoriety as a propaganda machine. Reports were often fabricated or exaggerated, but they solicited response. Reports to the Philippines, often edited to reflect support for the cause of the Filipinos, projected a feeling of hope--although of short duration--to the hard-pressed insurgents.

The credibility of the *Junta* bagan to be questioned after the American elections of 1900. In the face of Bryan's defeat, the *Junta's* continued claim of foreign support for the insurgent cause rang hollow. The realities of the war were to be found in the

Philippines; out of communication with Aguinaldo and losing contact with the populace, the *Junta* began to slip into a state of fantasy and impracticality.

This condition existed more acutely among the agents abroad, most of whom were appointed from the *Junta*. Like Sixto Lopez, they exhibited a tendency towards grandiose and unrealistic schemes, for they were out of touch with the homeland and relied upon the *Junta* for information and direction. Some, comfortable in their sanctuaries, urged their countrymen to fight to the end, while adding insincere promises to return to the Philippines to die beside their brothers.

Aguinaldo's capture heralded not only the end of the revolution, but also the death of the *Junta*. He symbolized the movement, and his oath of allegiance to the United States signified his acceptance of the inevitable. Ricarte's attempt to resurrect the *Junta* was but a final tremor, for the organization was dead.

The *Junta* must be recognized as the vehicle which sustained the revolutionary movement, keeping it alive by finding external support. Aguinaldo's leadership was essential to the *Junta's* development and existence, for he established its purpose and directed it towards the goal of independence. Although this

objective was not realized, the *Junta* was instrumental in making it a national aspiration. The impetus generated by this band of men changed the course of Filipino history, bound its fate to that of the United States, and fused nationalism with independence.

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[1]Sir John Bowring, *A Visit to the Philippine Islands* (London: Smith and Elder, 1859), p. 98.

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis is to trace the origin, evolution, and fate of an obscure organization that emerged during the Philippine Revolution, a group known as the Hong Kong *Junta*. The *Junta's* successes and failures are analyzed within the context of the Filipinos' quest for independence.

The signing of the pact of Biak-na-Bato in December, 1897, signaled the end of the first phase of the Philippine Revolution. Aguinaldo and other revolutionary leaders were exiled by the Spaniards to Hong Kong, where they formed their revolutionary committee. The study begins with an examination of the social and political forces motivating the *Junta's* formation in 1898, and follows its struggles to its demise in 1903.

The primary sources used in this study are microfilmed and translated copies of material found in the *Philippine Insurgent Records*, in the custody of the National Library of the Philippines. Extensive use was also made of United States government documents, particularly consular despatches, Senate documents, and Congressional records, which provided a wealth of translated Spanish and Filipino documents. Memoirs of

revolutionary personalities, although ancillary, proved helpful in determining the mood and direction of the revolutionary movement. Whenever possible, opposing viewpoints--Filipino, American, Spanish--were compared.

On the basis of the research, it was determined that the *Junta* linked the two phases of the revolution--Spanish and American. Under the leadership of Aguinaldo, the *Junta* effected an alliance leading to the downfall of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines, and subsequently involved the Filipino people in a brave but hopeless struggle against the United States. During the insurrection, the *Junta* achieved notoriety for its successful propaganda campaign but, despite individual successes, the organization failed to achieve its primary goal--Philippine independence. In retrospect, however, the *Junta* did not fail, for it transmitted to the Philippines and instilled in the populace the desire for independence--a goal that remained with the people until it was achieved fifty years later.

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